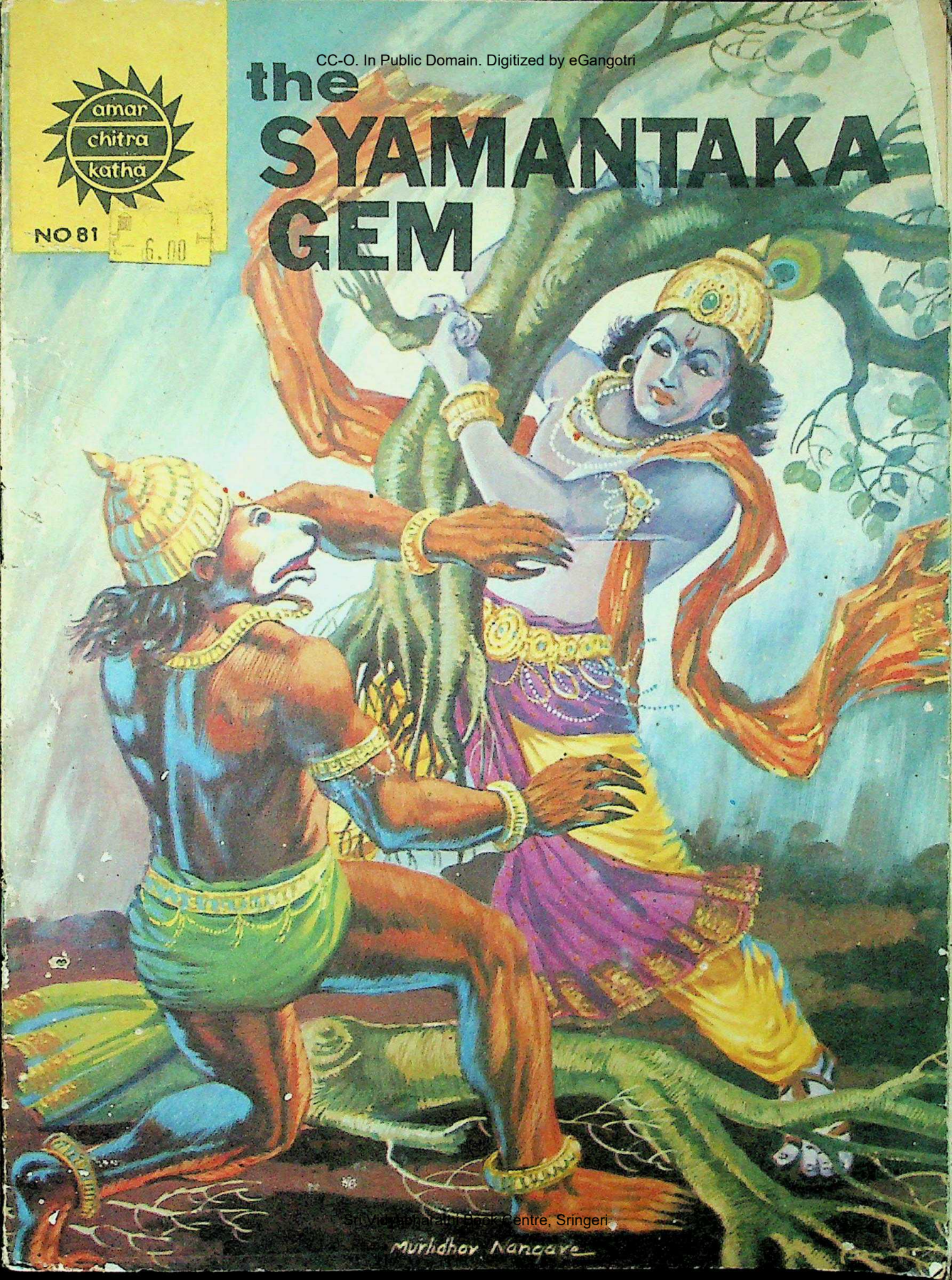




NO 81

6.00

the SYAMANTAKA GEM



Sri Venkateswara Prakashan, Sringeri

Murlidhar Nangare

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The Syamantaka Gem was an ornament of the Sun God. It was a magical charm which had strange effects on its possessor. It did good to a virtuous person and bad to an evil one. When Surya, pleased with his devotee Prince Satrajit, bestowed the gem on him, no one foresaw the violent upheavals it would cause, least of all the prince himself.

Satrajit gave the gem to his brother, Prasena, who was killed by a lion, Jambavan, king of the bears killed the lion and carried off the gem. But since Krishna had admired the gem, he was suspected of having stolen it. To save his honour, Krishna went on a desperate gem hunt to the jungle. The adventures that follow make interesting reading and are narrated in this book, which is based on the version that appears in Bhagawat Purana.

It is said that Krishna had looked at the moon on Chaturthi (the fourth day after the full moon) and soon after was accused of having stolen the gem. To this day, the superstitious will not look at the moon on Chaturthi lest they be accused of theft.



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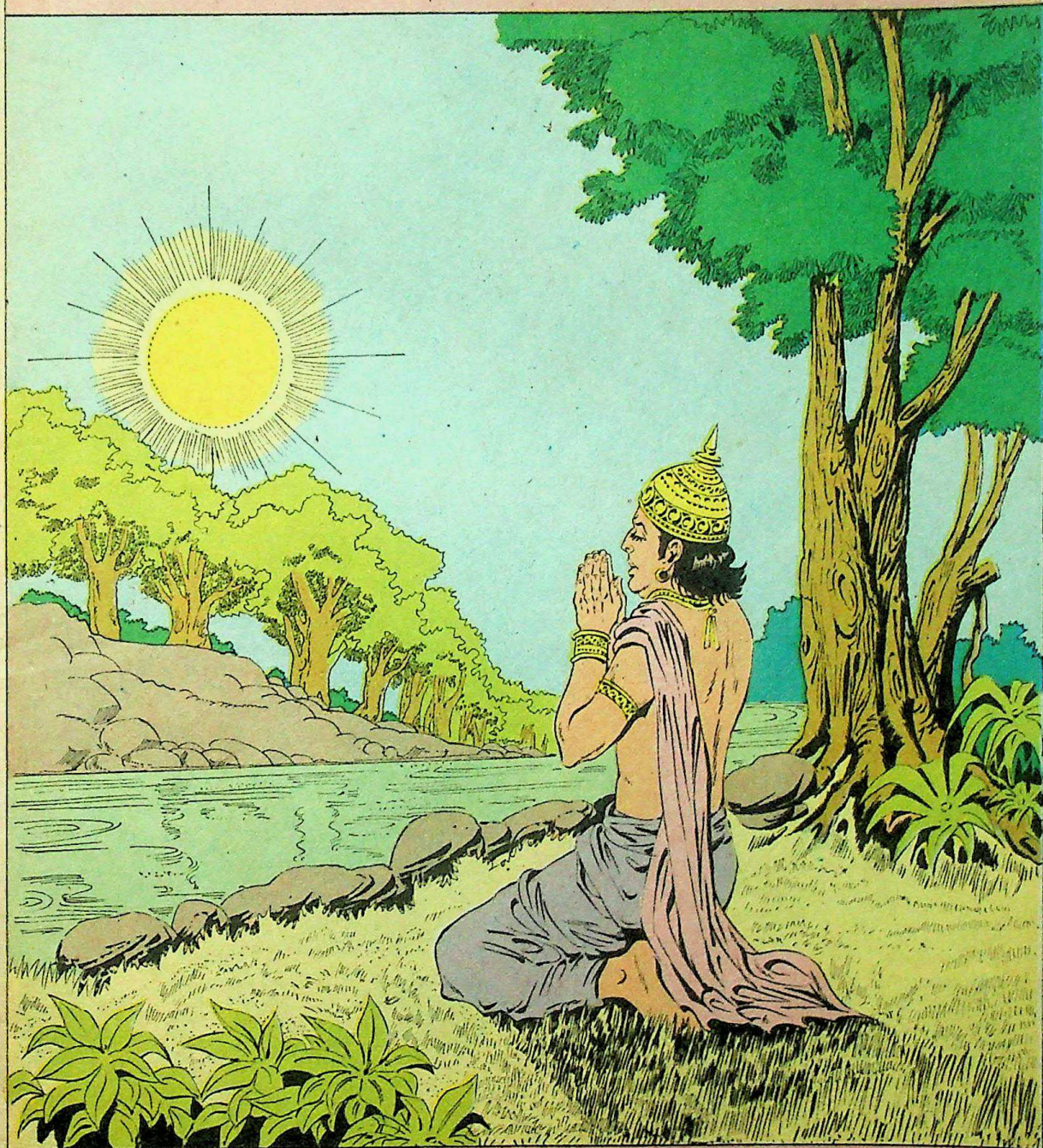
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Bombay-400059.

Sri Vidyabharathi Book Centre, Sringeri

Editor: Anant Pai

Artwork: H.S. Chavan

THE SYAMANTAKA GEM



PRINCE SATRAJIT OF DWARAKA WAS A
DEVOTEE OF SURYA, THE SUN GOD.

ONE DAY, AS HE WAS RIDING THROUGH A FOREST

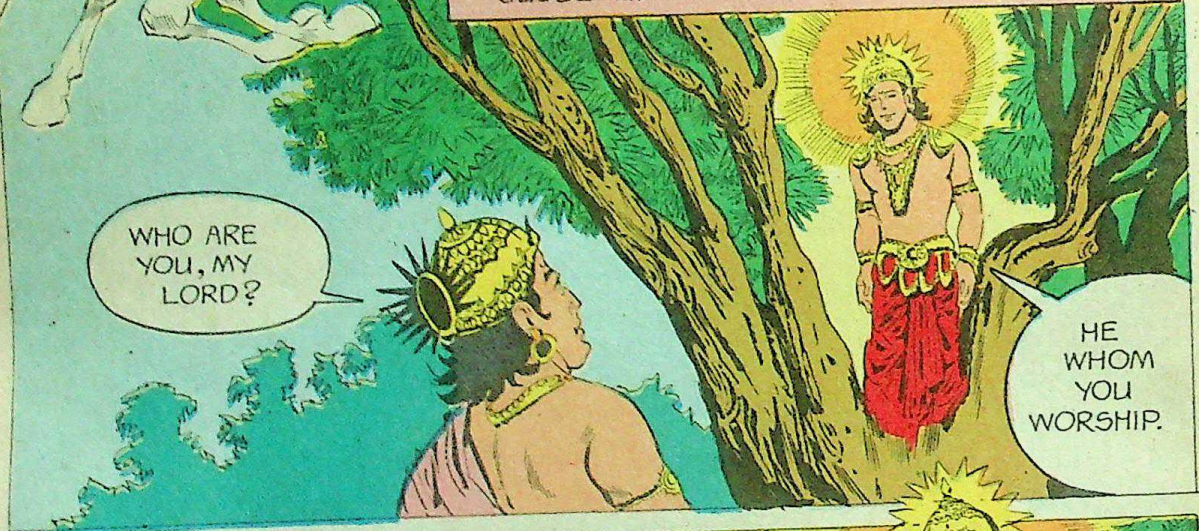
WHAT A
TERRIBLE
GLARE!



SUDDENLY THE TREES PARTED.

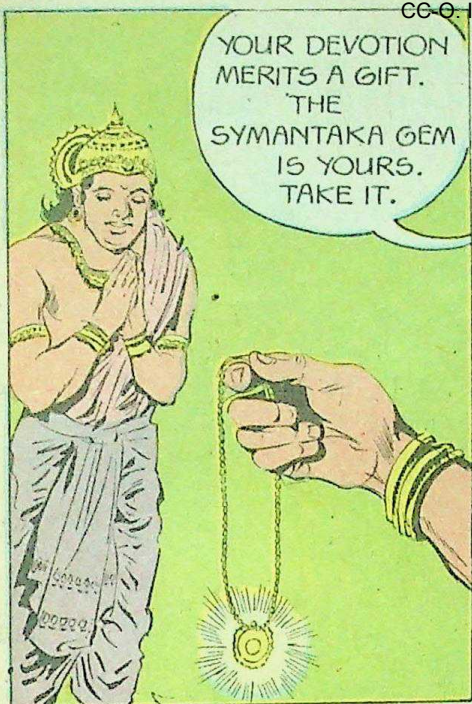
WHO ARE
YOU, MY
LORD?

HE
WHOM
YOU
WORSHIP.



I AM
BLESSED.





THE SUN GOD DISAPPEARED.

THE JEWEL
SHINES SO
BRIGHTLY THAT
IT LIGHTS
MY PATH.



SATRAJIT RODE BACK TO DWARAKA WEARING ABOUT HIM THE RADIANCE OF THE SYAMANTAKA.

WHAT HAS
HAPPENED TO
OUR PRINCE?

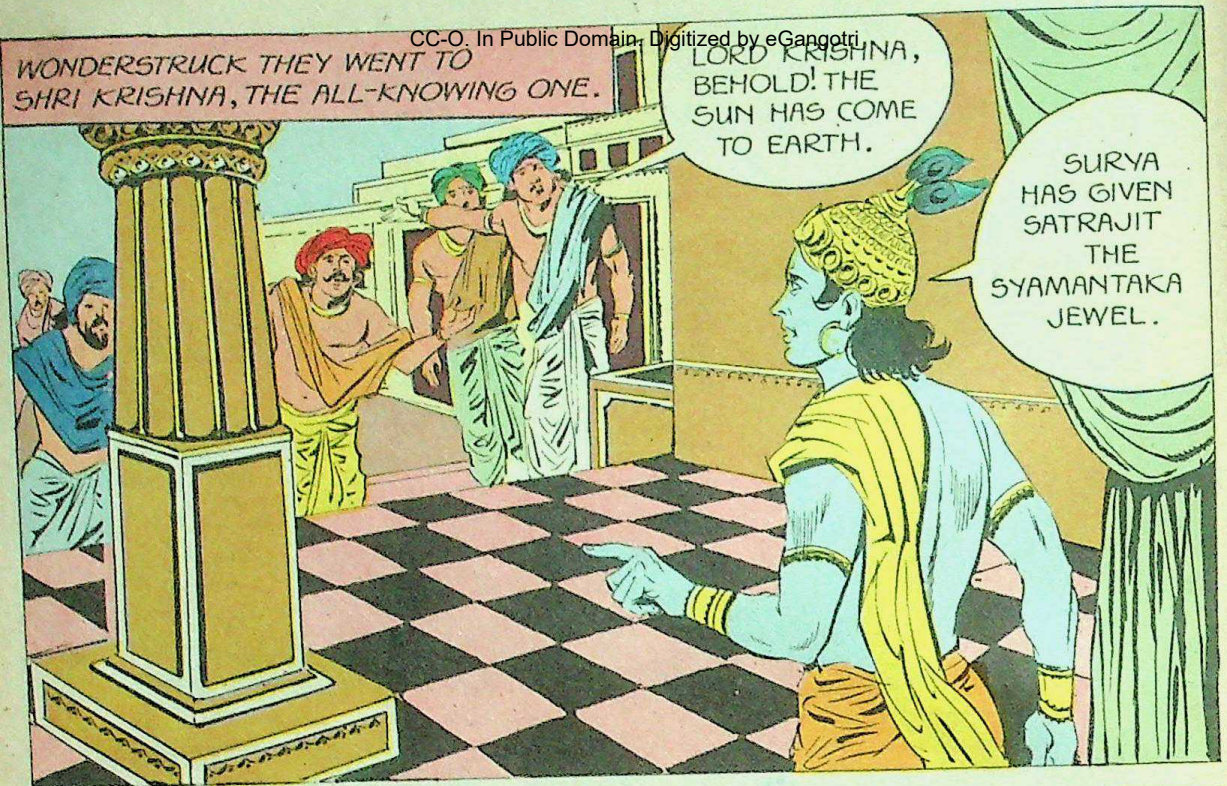
HE
SHINES WITH
A STRANGE
LIGHT.

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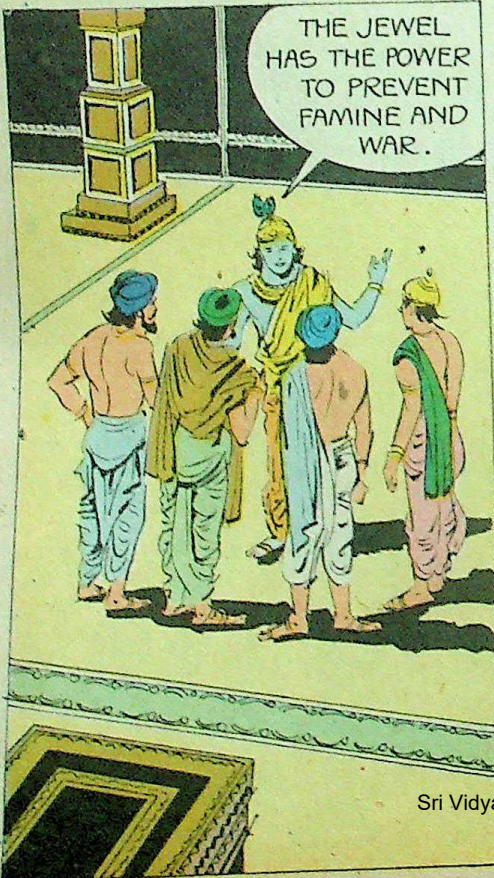
WONDERSTRUCK THEY WENT TO
SHRI KRISHNA, THE ALL-KNOWING ONE.

LORD KRISHNA,
BEHOLD! THE
SUN HAS COME
TO EARTH.

SURYA
HAS GIVEN
SATRAJIT
THE
SYAMANTAKA
JEWEL.

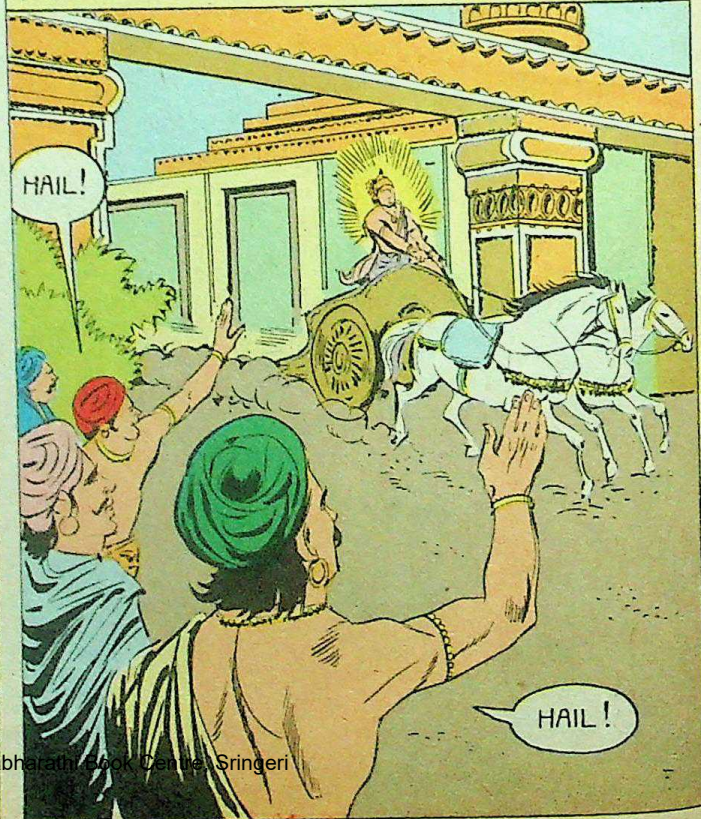


THE JEWEL
HAS THE POWER
TO PREVENT
FAMINE AND
WAR.



MEANWHILE SATRAJIT REACHED HIS PALACE.

HAIL!

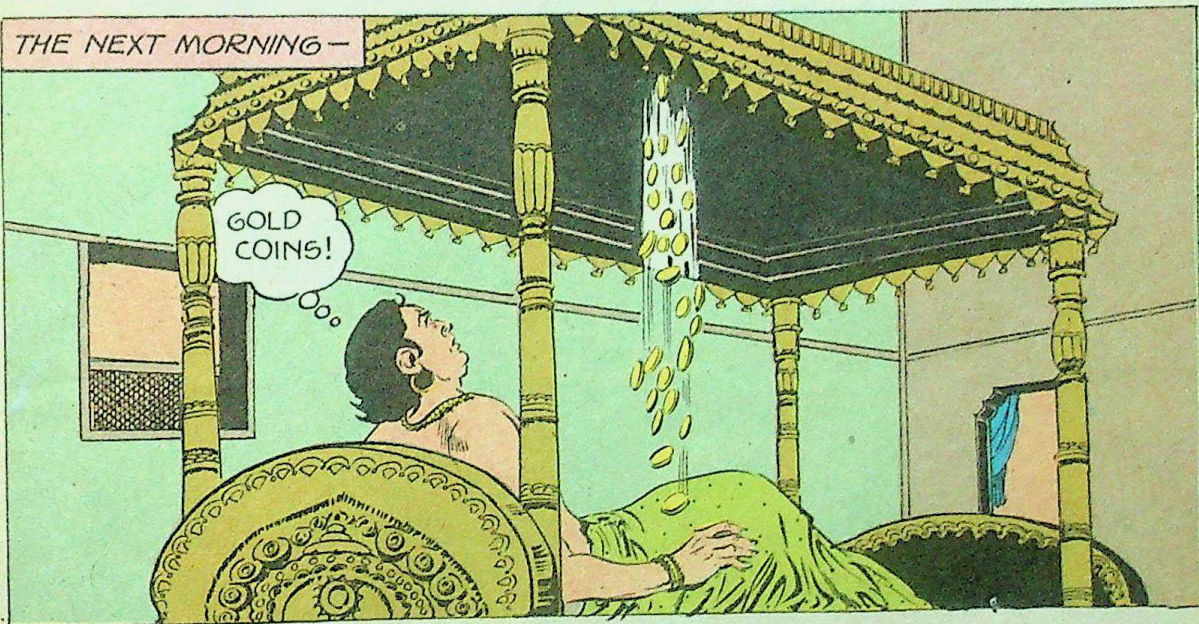


HAIL!

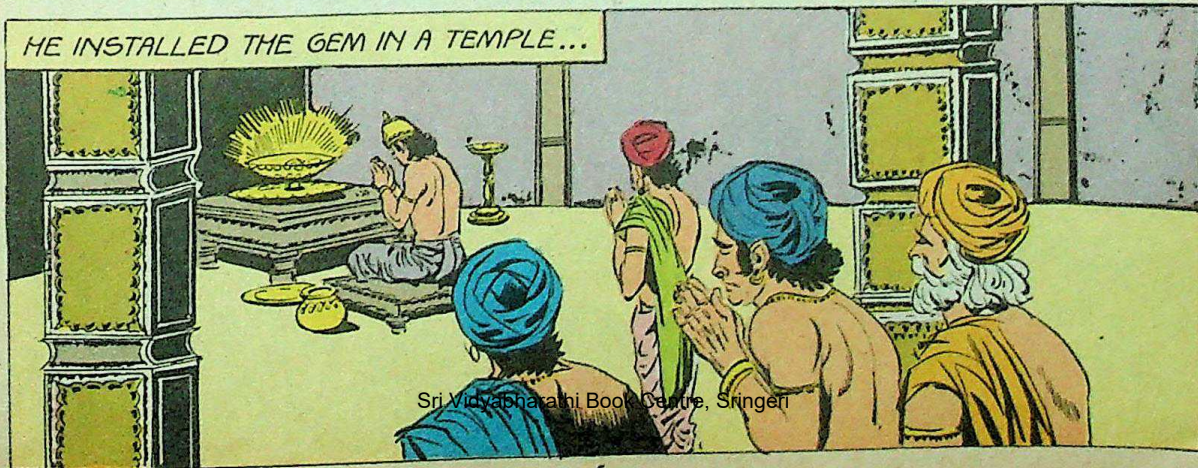
THAT NIGHT HE WENT TO BED, WEARING THE GEM.



THE NEXT MORNING —



HE INSTALLED THE GEM IN A TEMPLE...



...AND WORSHIPPED IT.

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FORTH EIGHT
MEASURES
OF GOLD
A DAY!

THE GEM BROUGHT PEACE AND PROSPERITY
IN ITS WAKE.

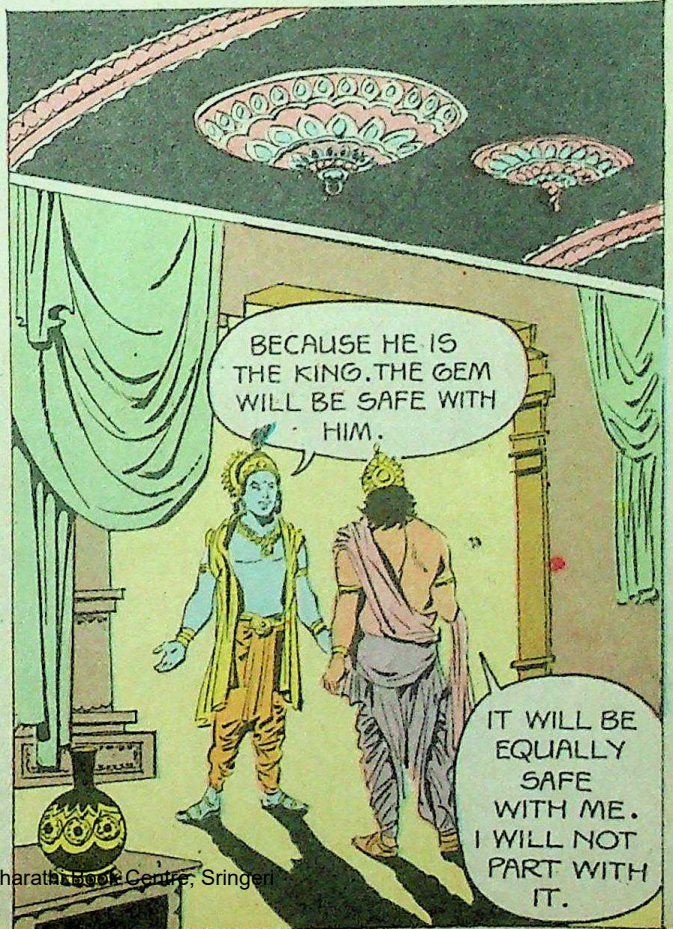
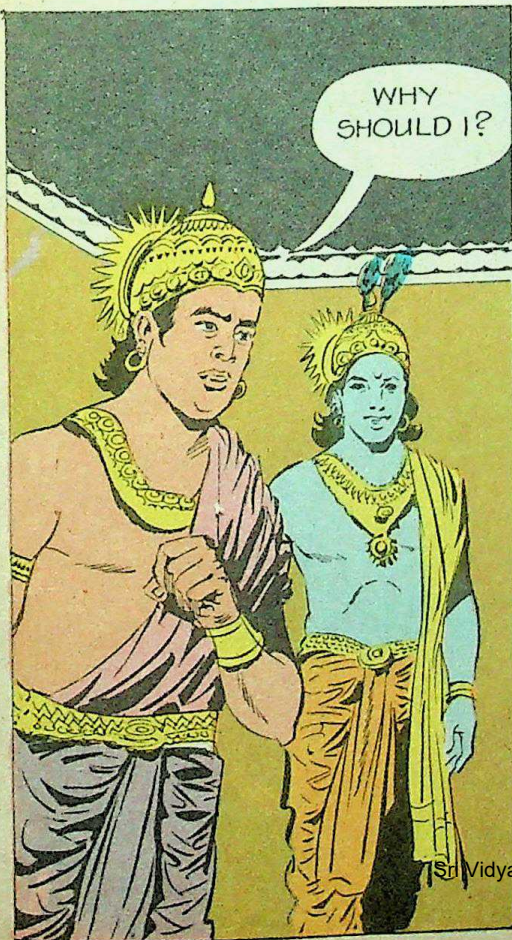
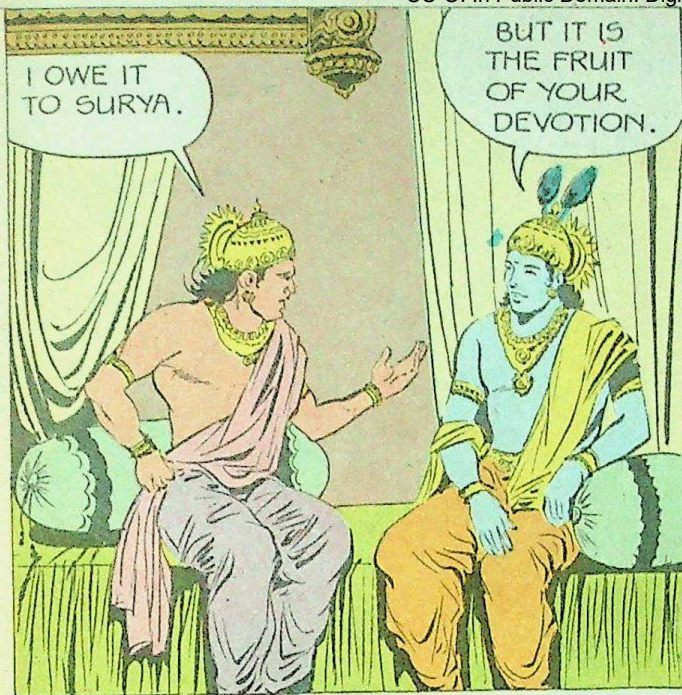
WE HAVE
BEEN
FAVoured!

WE WILL
NEVER
KNOW
FAMINE
OR
WAR!

ONE DAY KRISHNA VISITED SATRAJIT.

WELCOME, SHRI
KRISHNA.

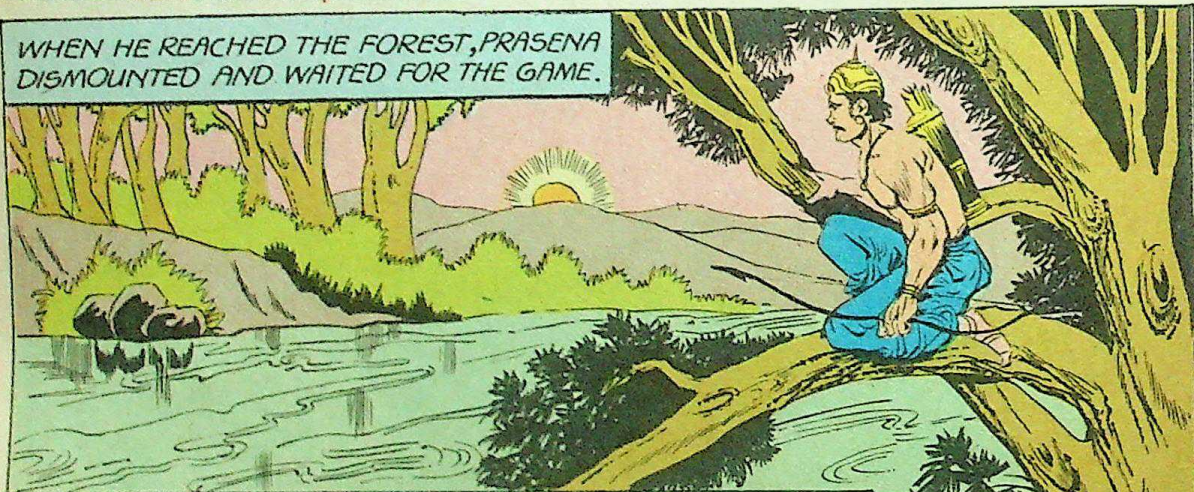
DWARAKA IS
HUMMING WITH
TALES OF YOUR
GOOD FORTUNE.

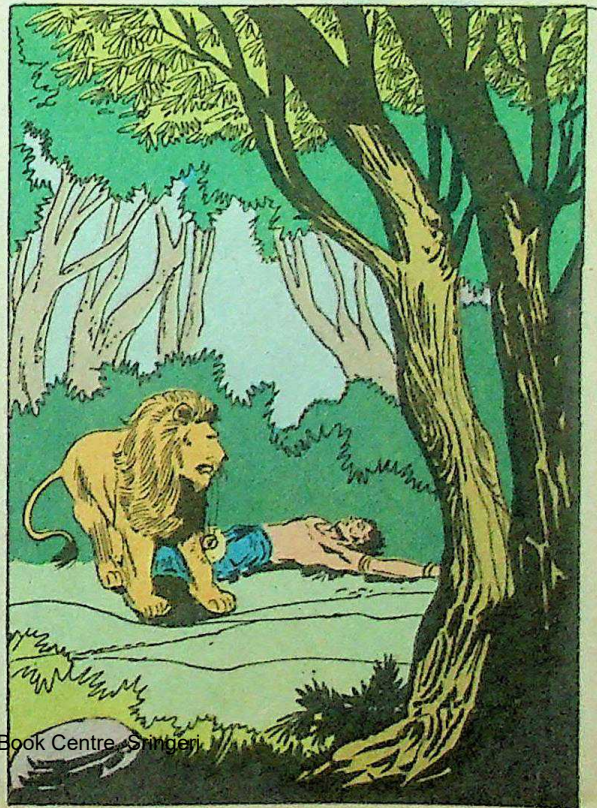
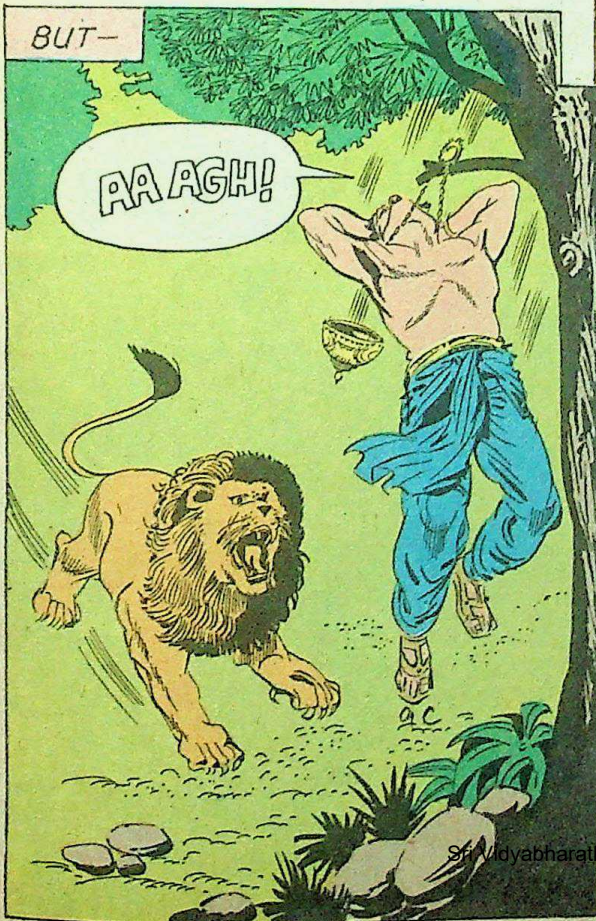
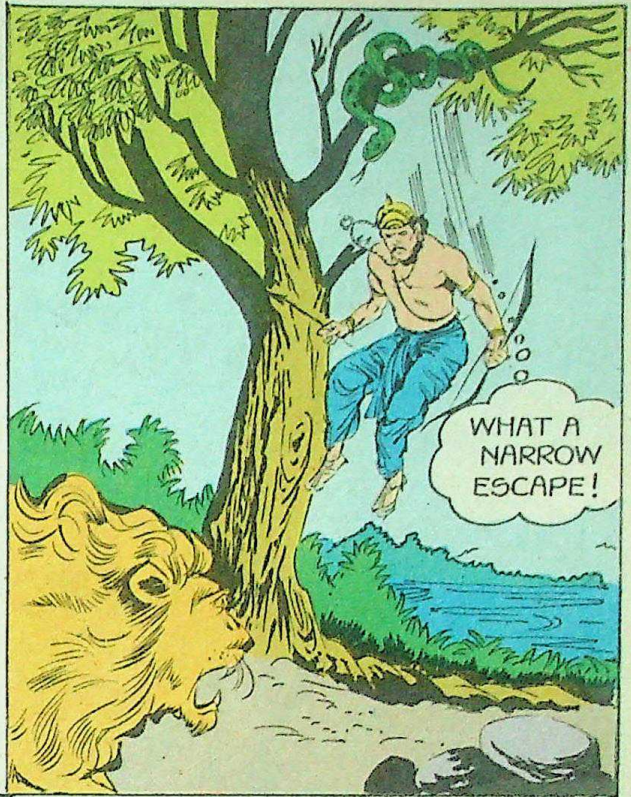
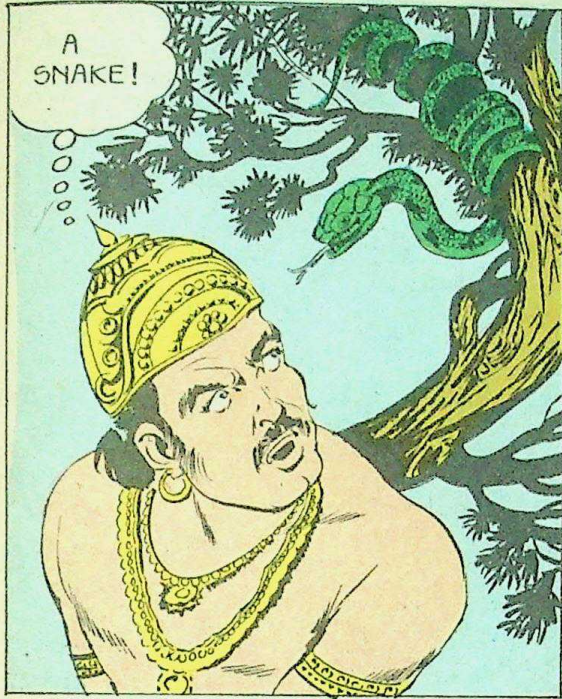


A FEW DAYS LATER, SATRAJIT'S BROTHER, PRASENA, WENT OUT ON A HUNT, WEARING THE JEWEL.



WHEN HE REACHED THE FOREST, PRASENA DISMOUNTED AND WAITED FOR THE GAME.

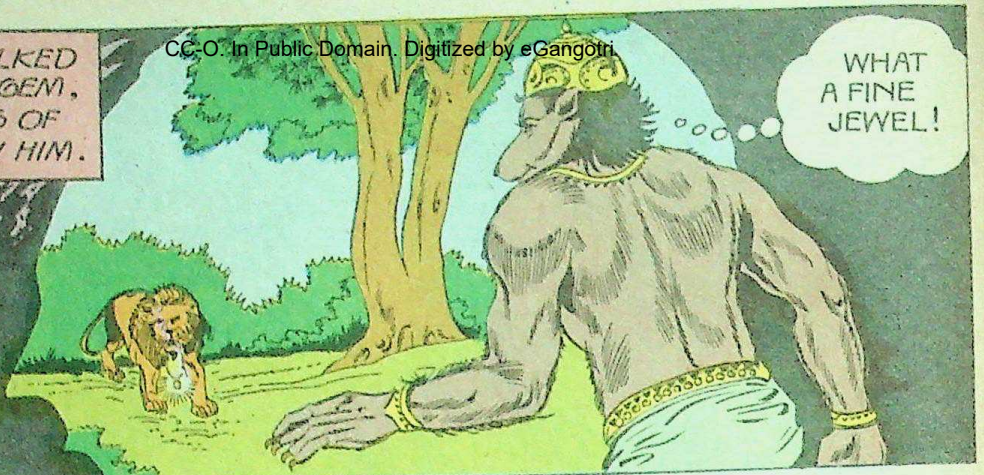




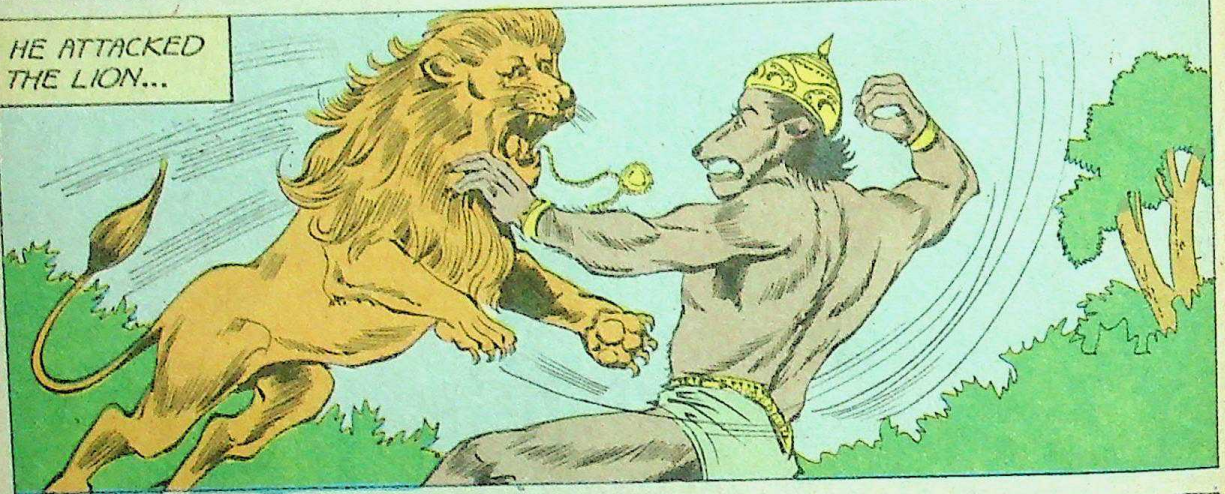
AS THE LION WALKED
AWAY WITH THE GEM,
JAMBAVAN, KING OF
THE BEARS, SAW HIM.

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WHAT
A FINE
JEWEL!

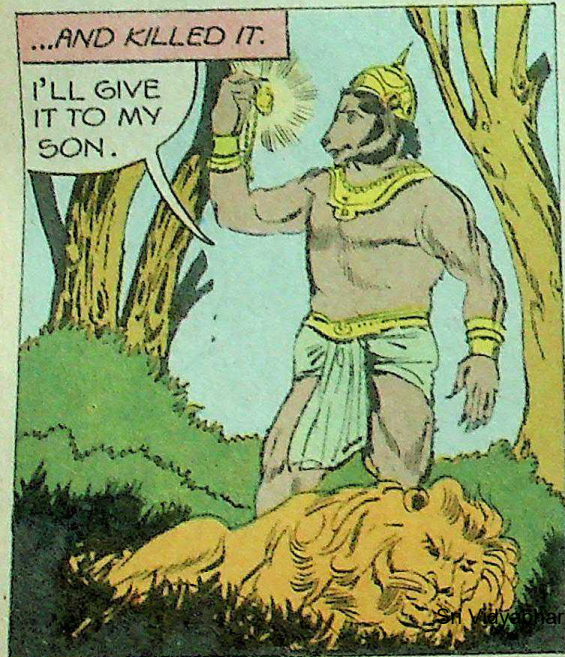


HE ATTACKED
THE LION...



...AND KILLED IT.

I'LL GIVE
IT TO MY
SON.



HERE IS
SOMETHING
FOR YOU, SON!



MEANWHILE AT DWARAKA —

PRASENA
HAS NOT
RETURNED FROM
THE HUNT.

WHAT COULD
HAVE HAPPENED
TO HIM ?

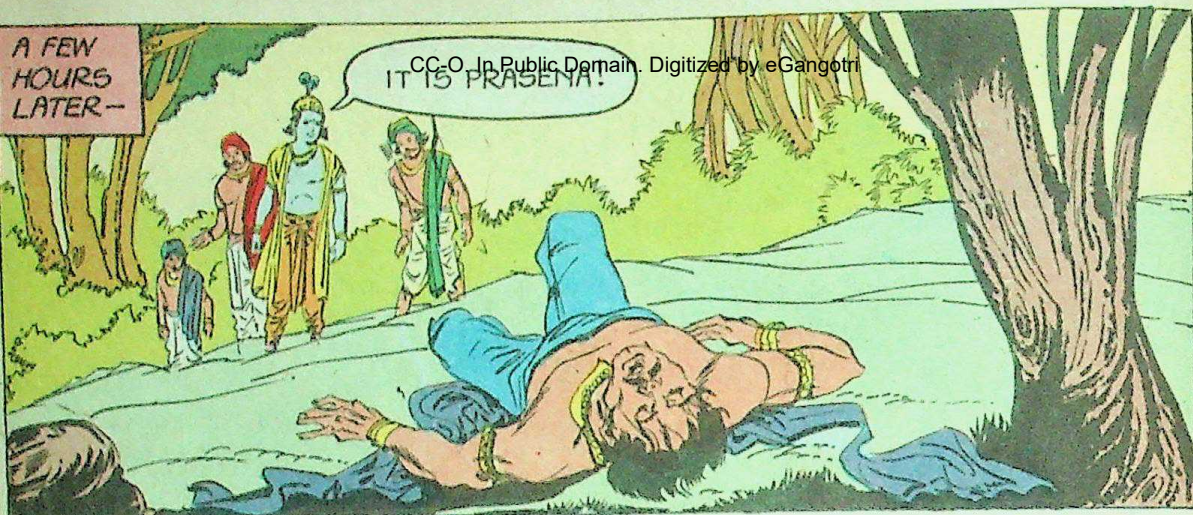
I AM SURE, KRISHNA
MUST HAVE KILLED
MY BROTHER FOR
THE SAKE OF
THE GEM.

SATRAJIT
SUSPECTS
ME.

I MUST
FIND THE
JEWEL AND
ESTABLISH
MY
INNOCENCE.

A FEW
HOURS
LATER—

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IT IS PRASENA!



HE'S DEAD! RED
MARKS ROUND
HIS NECK...
A BROKEN
BRANCH...

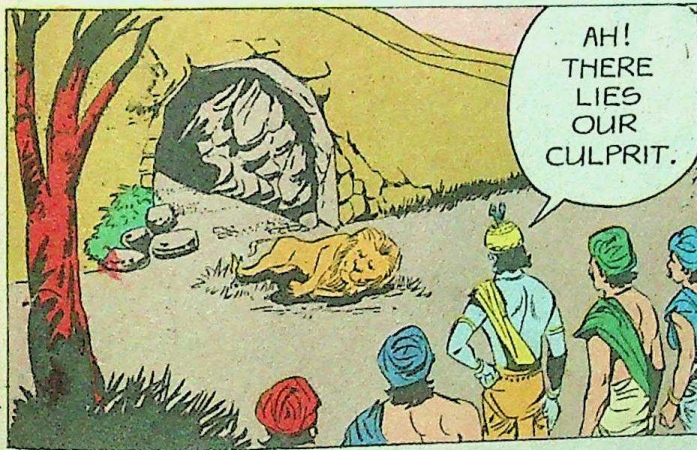
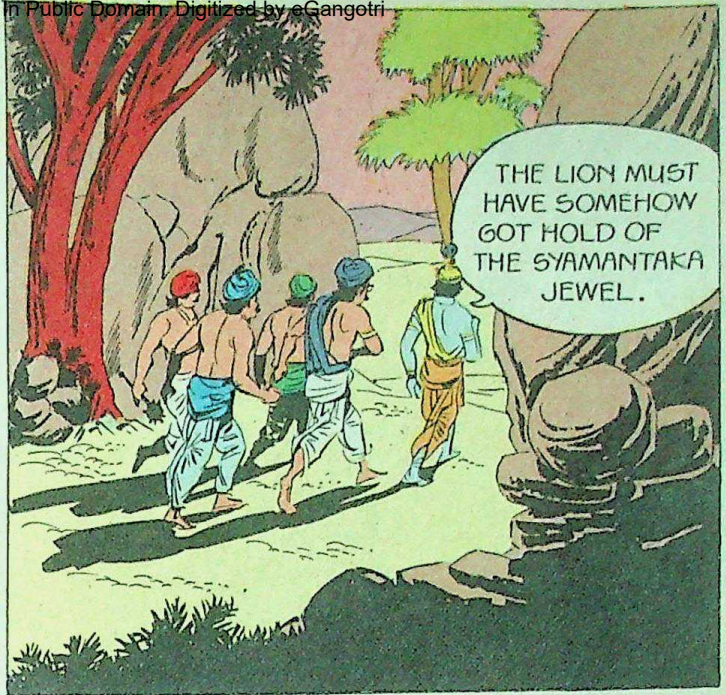
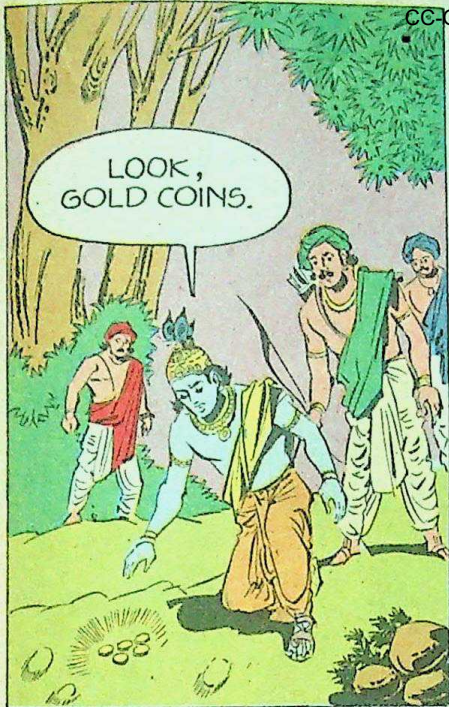


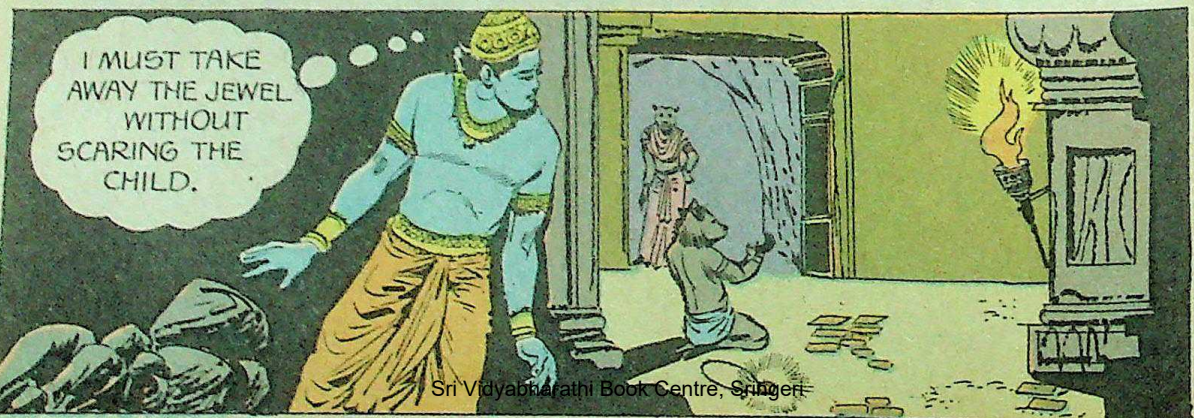
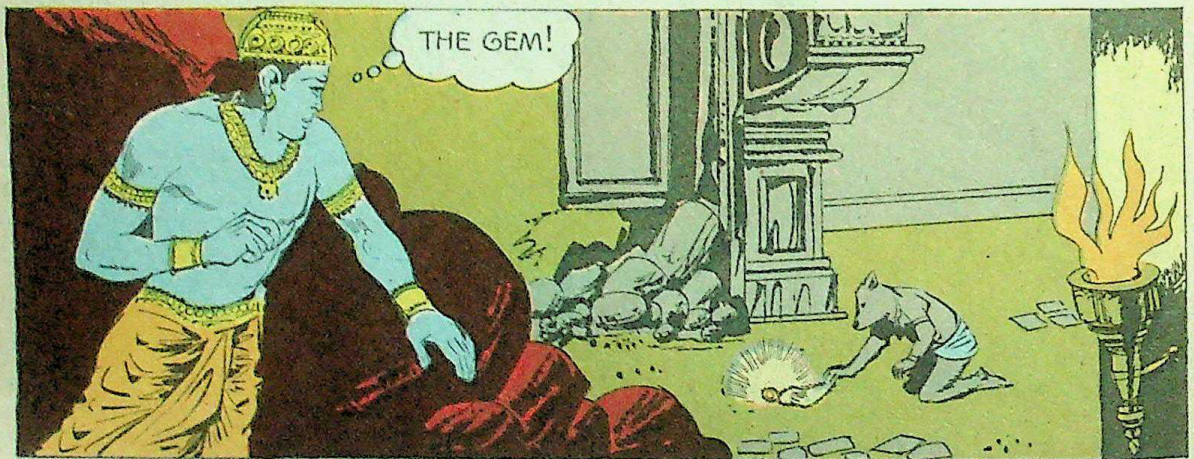
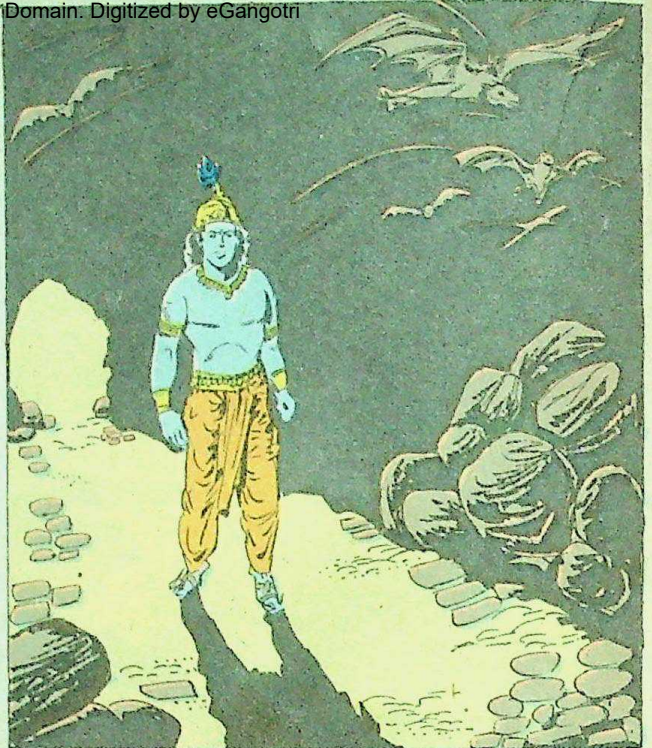
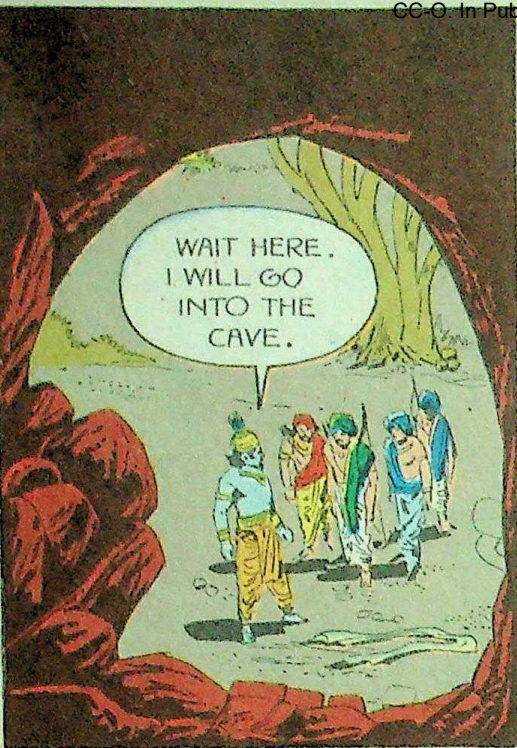
LOOK!
LION
TRACKS!

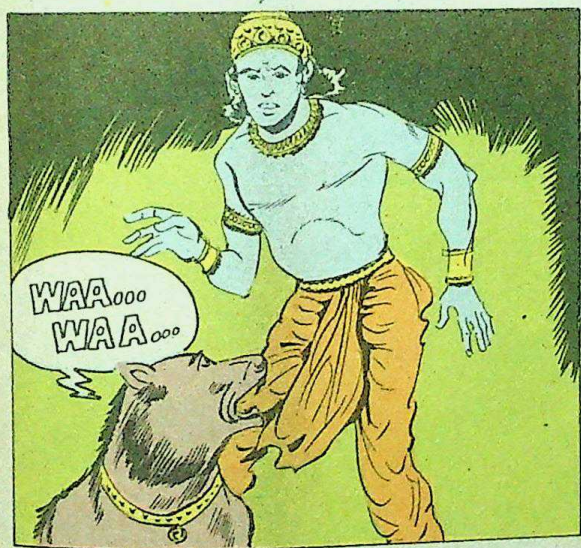
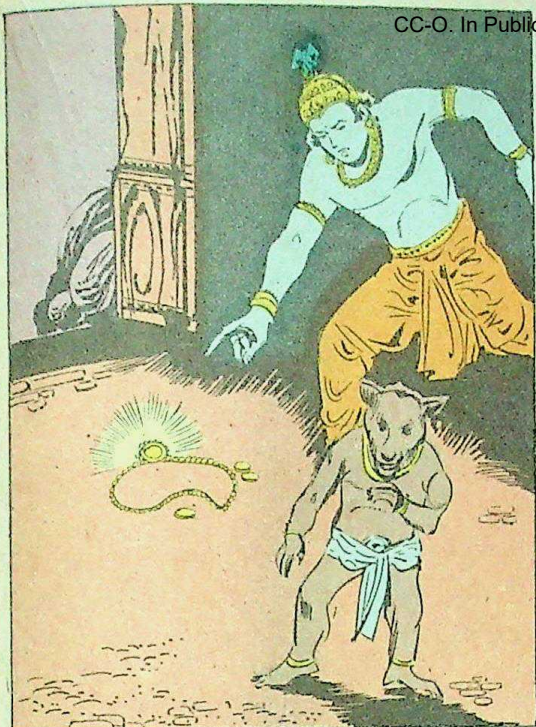


FOLLOW ME . IT LOOKS
AS IF HE WAS KILLED
BY A LION.

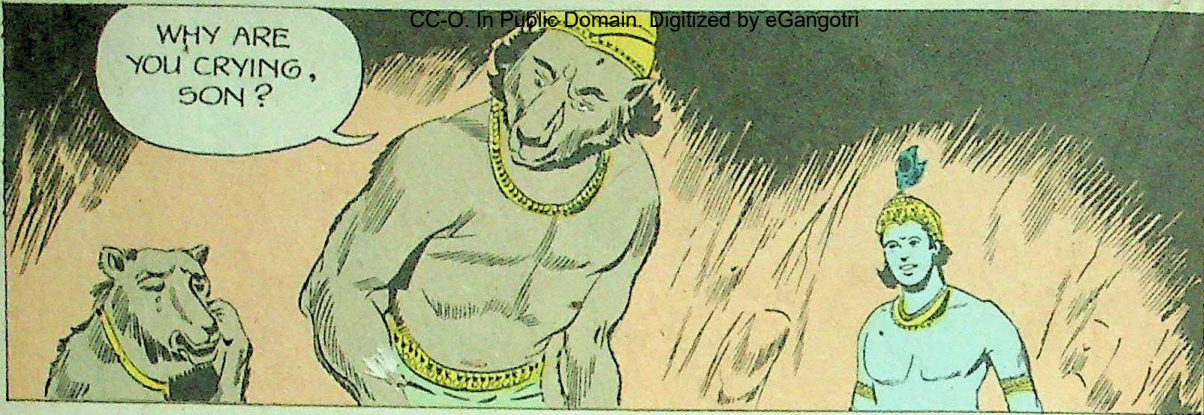








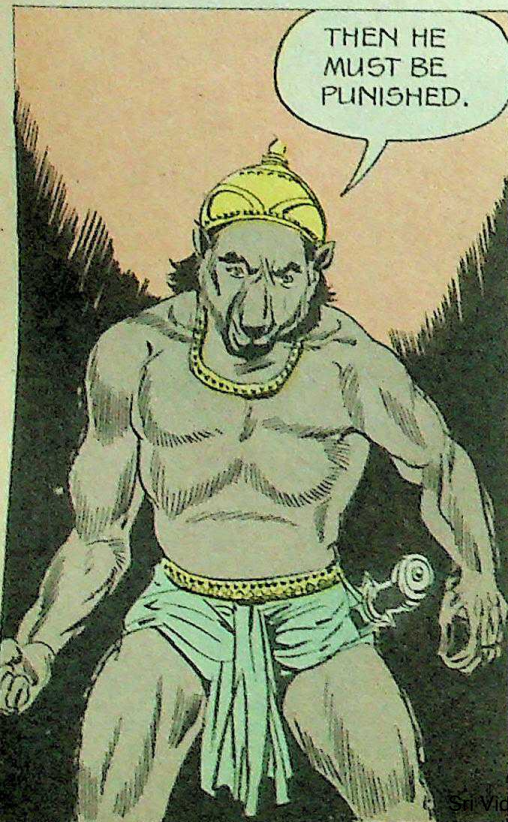
WHY ARE
YOU CRYING,
SON?



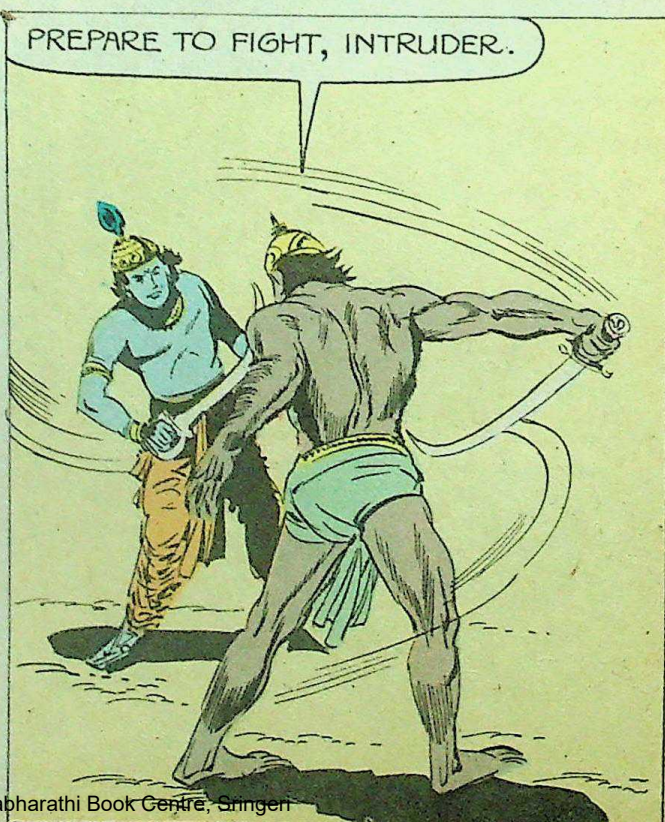
HE
FRIGHTENED
ME.

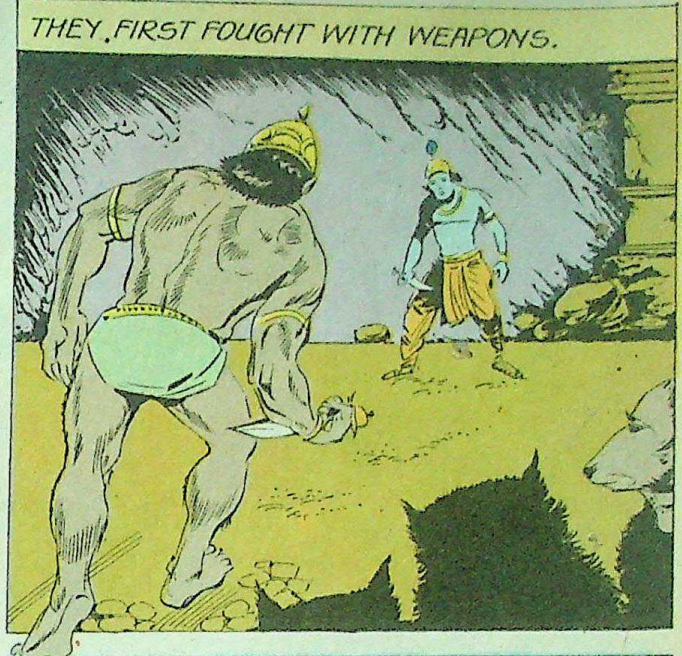
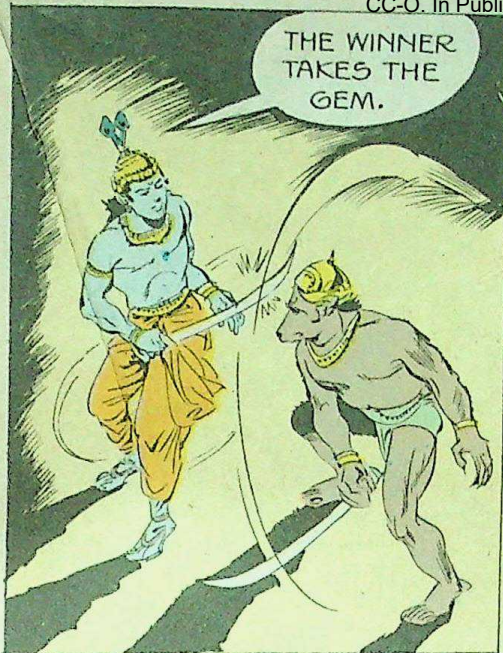


THEN HE
MUST BE
PUNISHED.

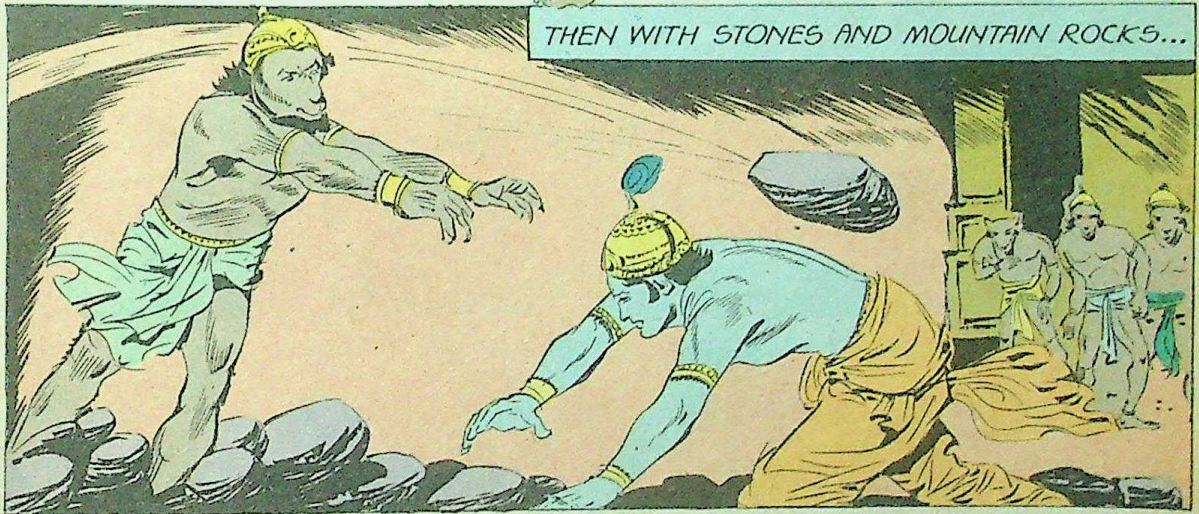


PREPARE TO FIGHT, INTRUDER.

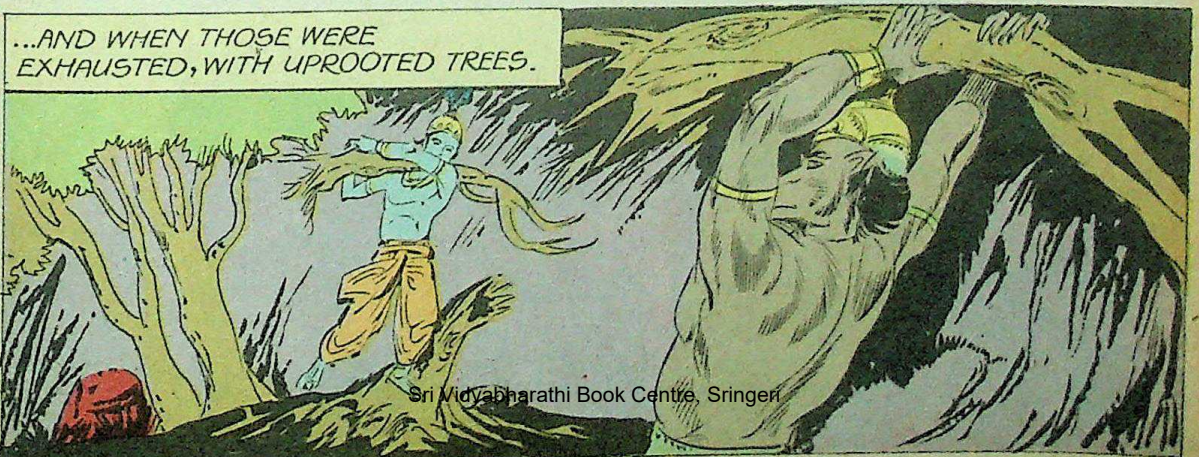




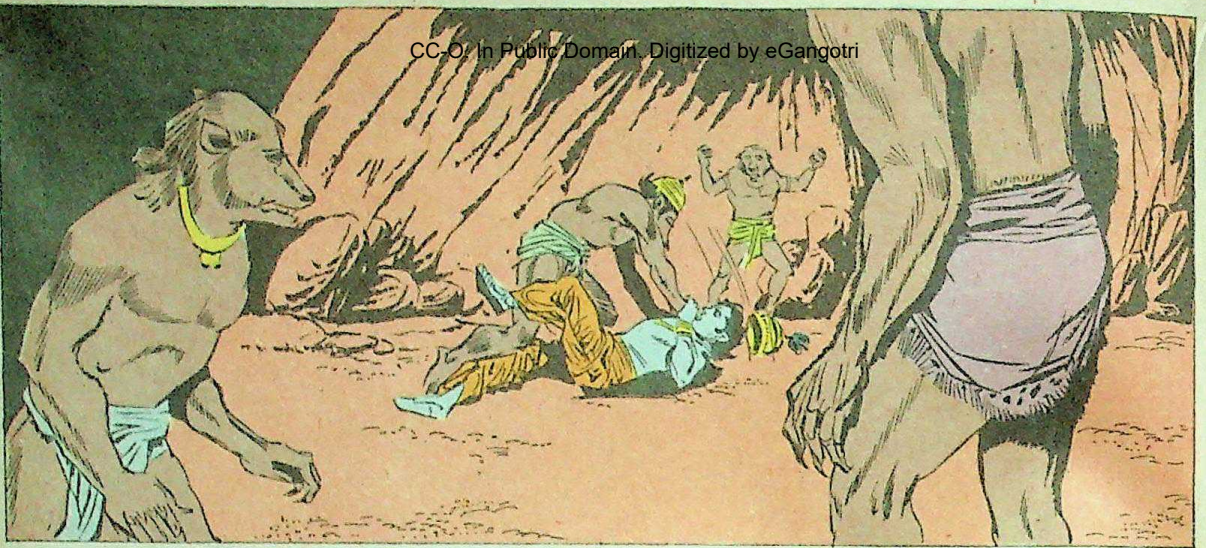
THEY FIRST FOUGHT WITH WEAPONS.



THEN WITH STONES AND MOUNTAIN ROCKS...



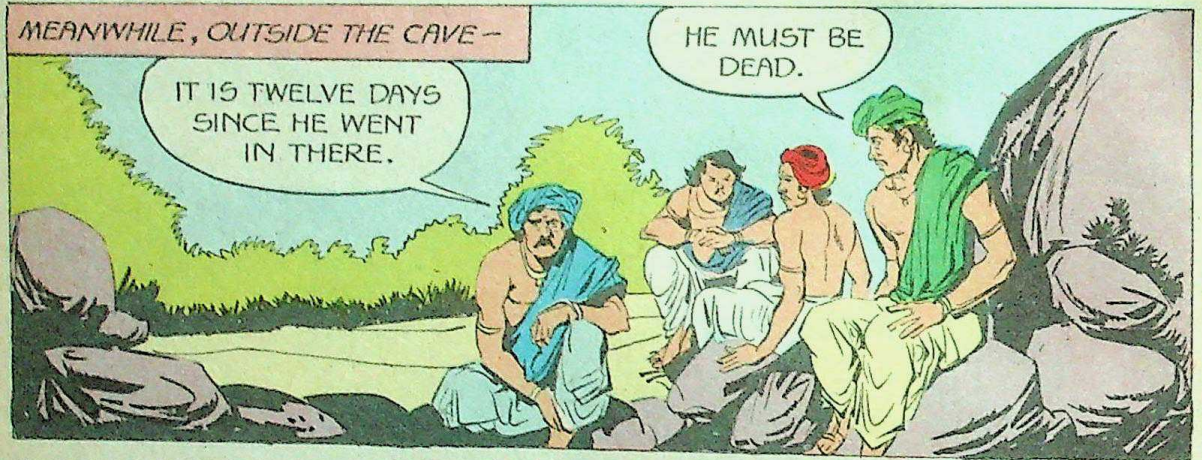
...AND WHEN THOSE WERE EXHAUSTED, WITH UPROOTED TREES.



MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE CAVE -

IT IS TWELVE DAYS
SINCE HE WENT
IN THERE.

HE MUST BE
DEAD.



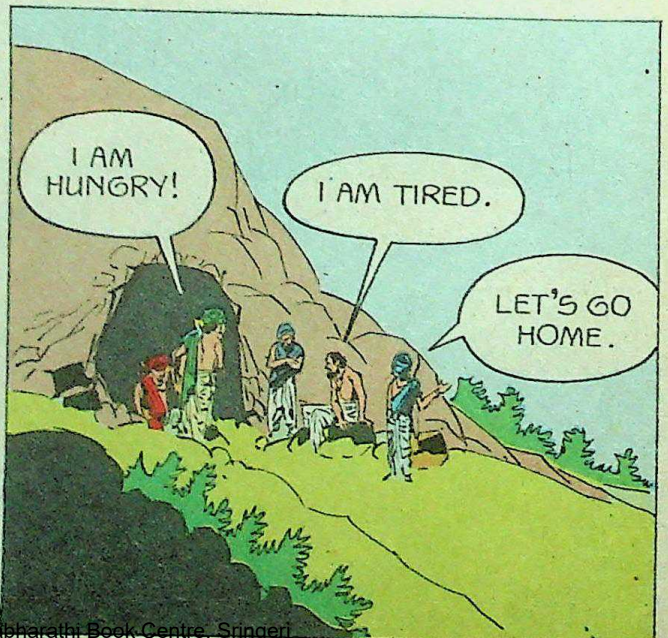
HE ASKED
US TO WAIT
HERE.



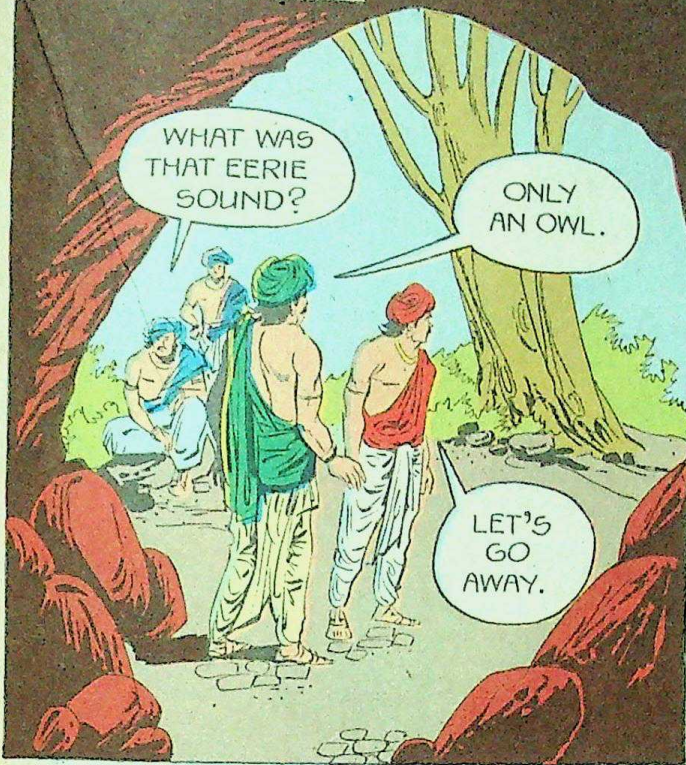
I AM
HUNGRY!

I AM TIRED.

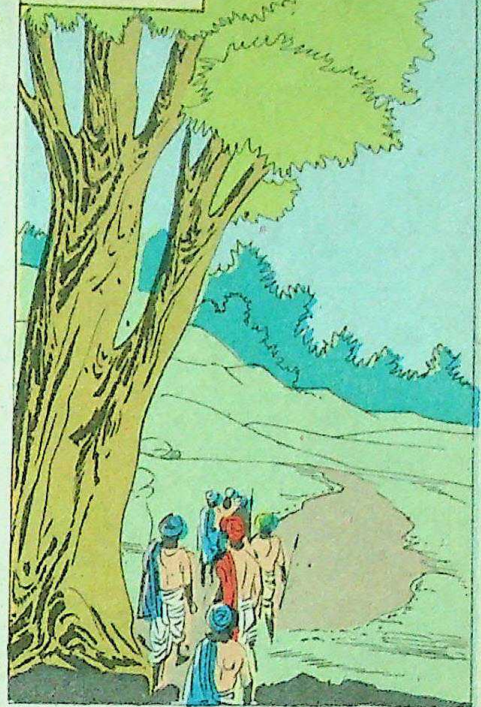
LET'S GO
HOME.



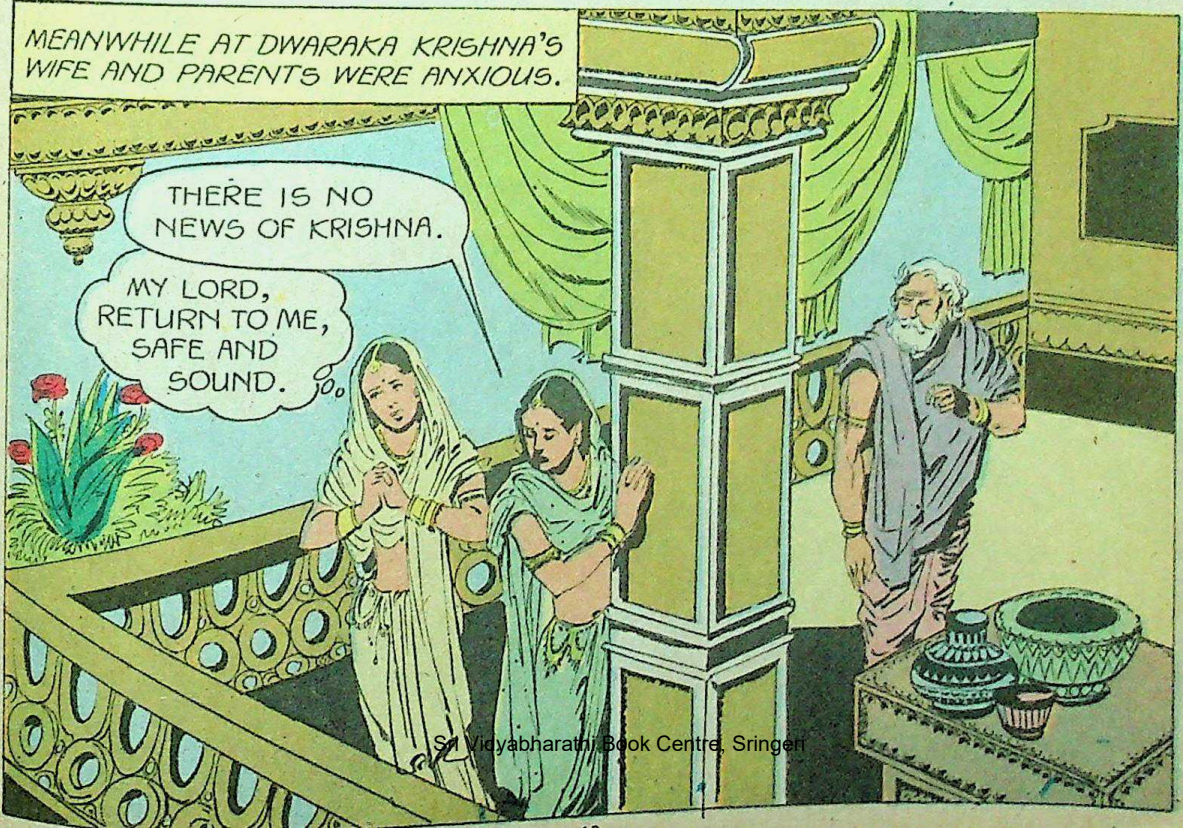
AN OWL HOOTED:-

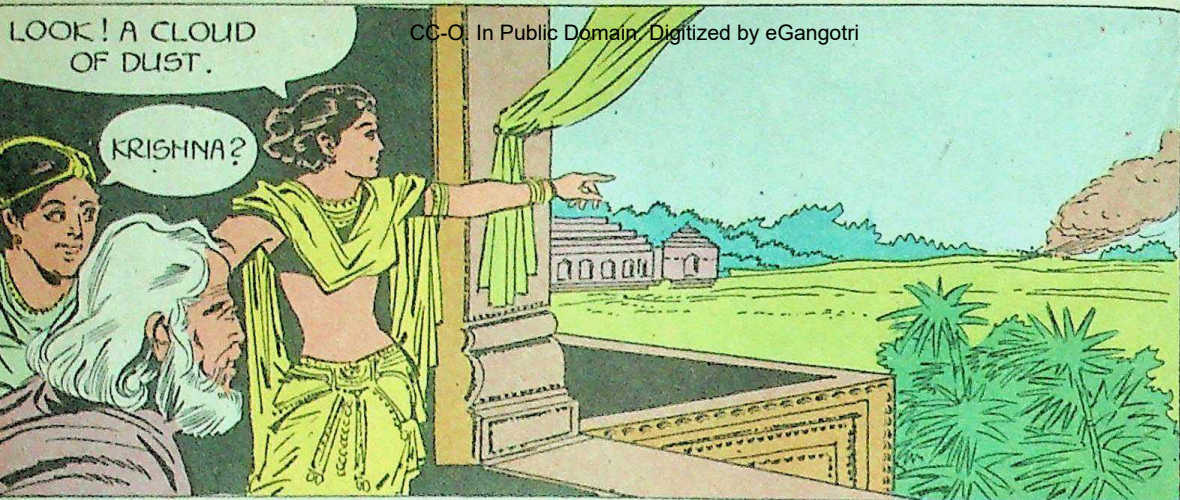


OVERCOME BY FEAR AND EXHAUSTION, THEY LEFT.



MEANWHILE AT DWARAKA KRISHNA'S WIFE AND PARENTS WERE ANXIOUS.





LOOK! A CLOUD OF DUST.

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KRISHNA?

BUT—

WE HAVE COME BACK WITHOUT KRISHNA.

WE FEAR HE IS DEAD.



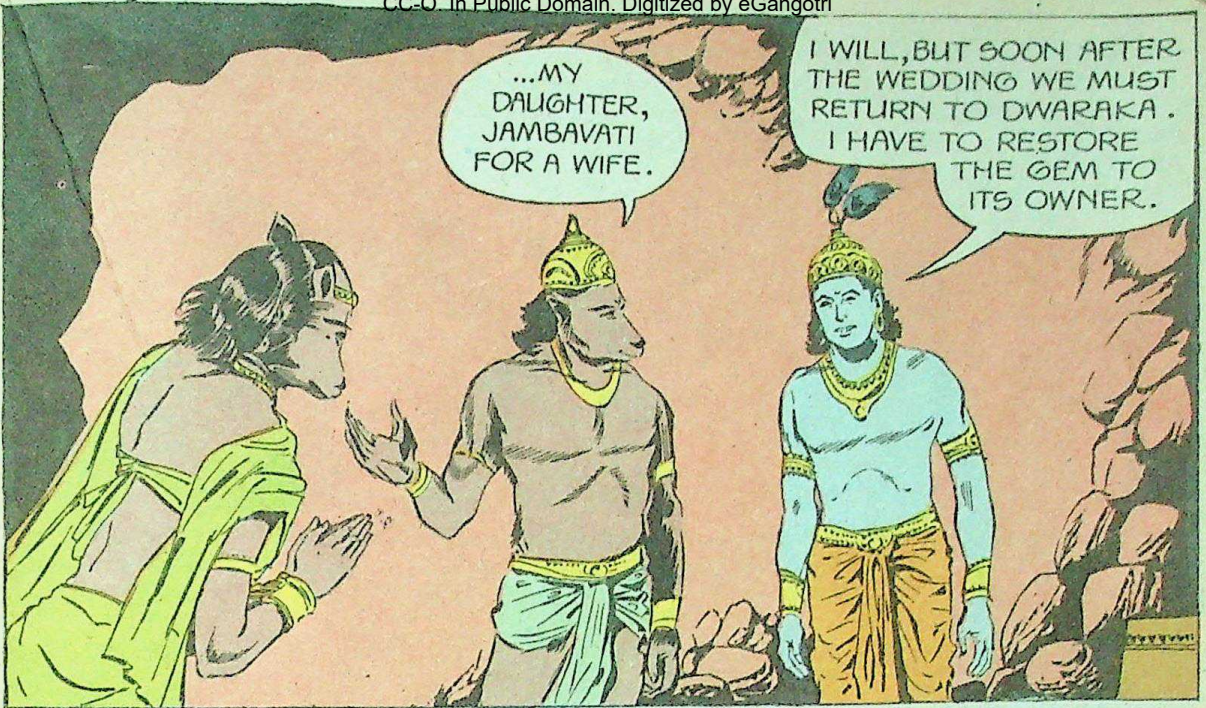
KRISHNA WAS NOT DEAD. AFTER TWENTY EIGHT DAYS OF CONTINUOUS FIGHTING —

YOU ARE INVINCIBLE. I SURRENDER.

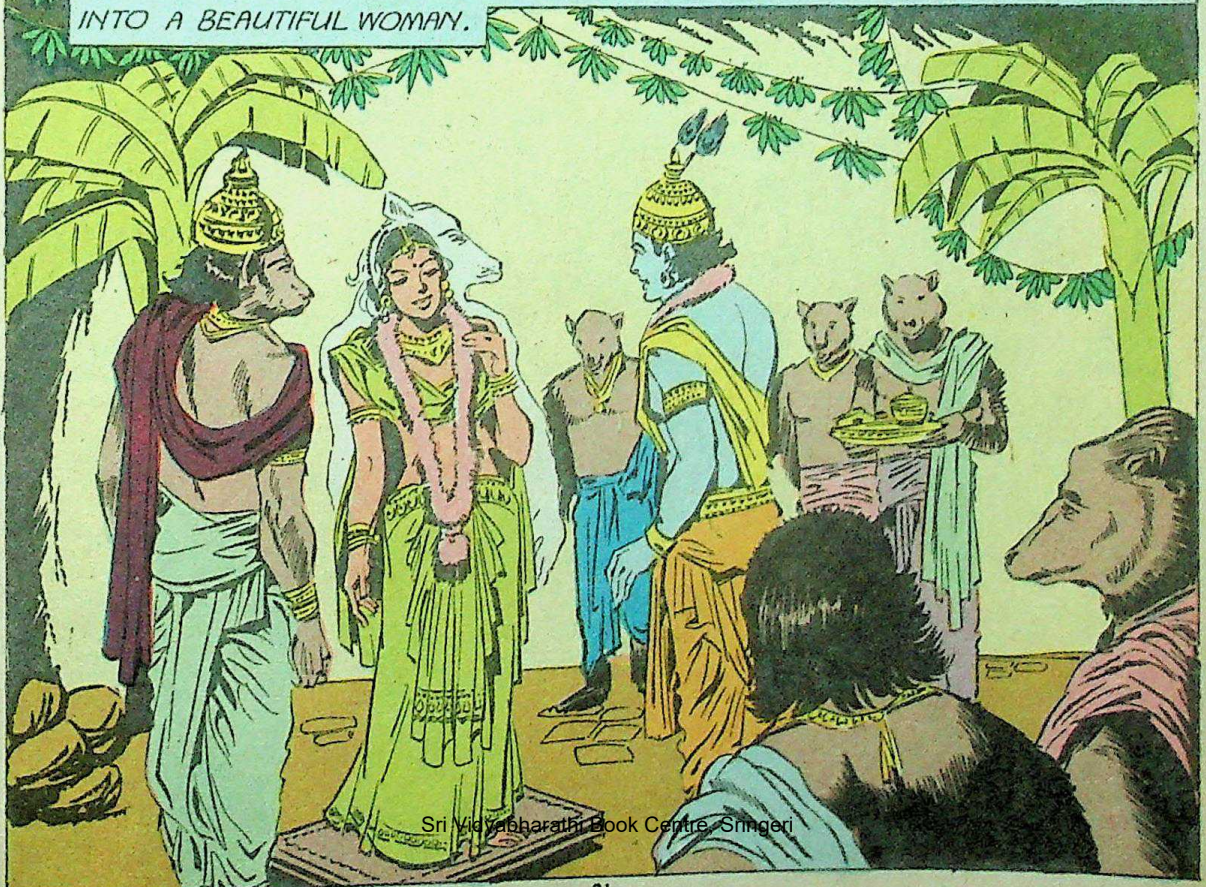


ALONG WITH THE GEM PLEASE ACCEPT...

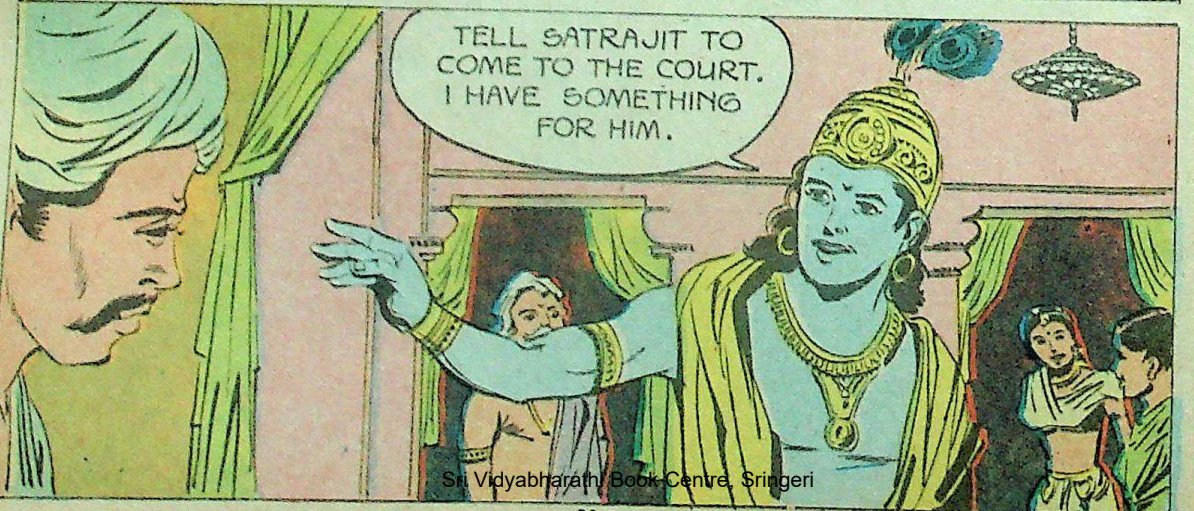
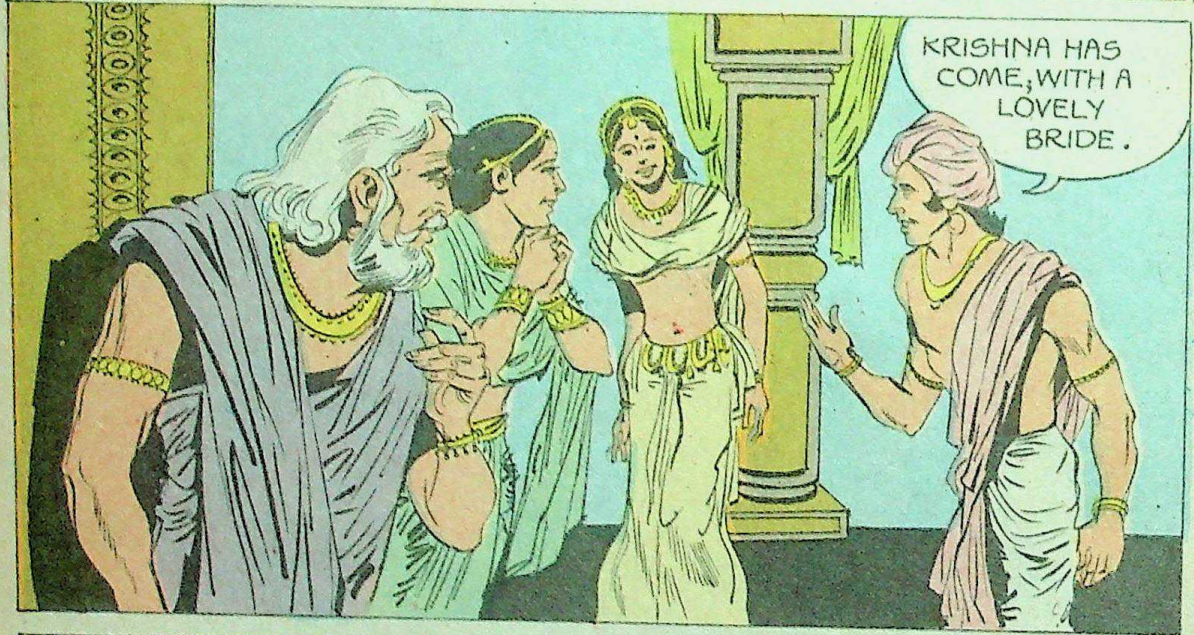
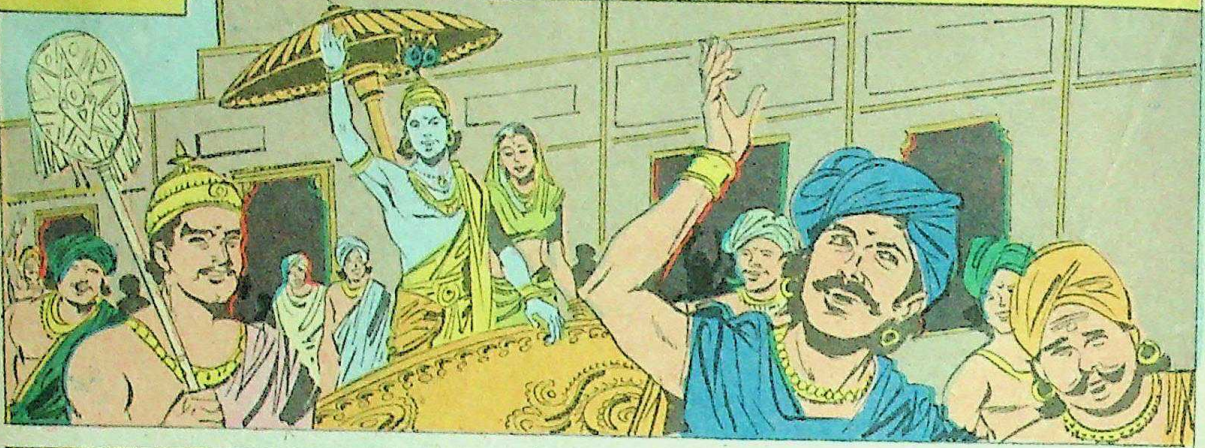




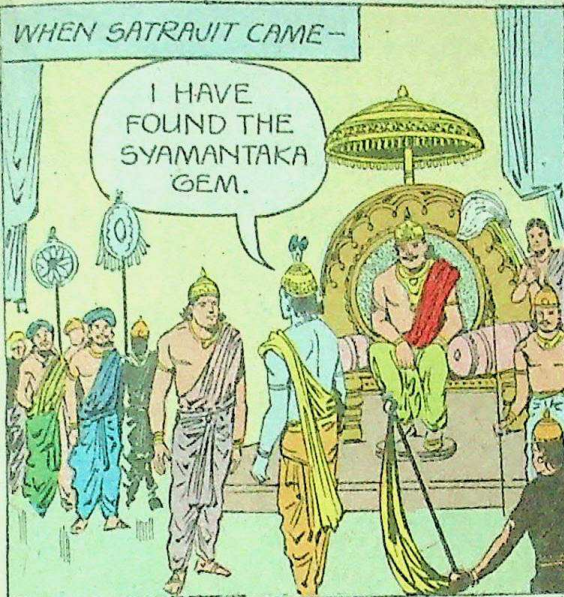
NO SOONER HAD THEY GARLANDED EACH OTHER THAN JAMBAVATI TURNED INTO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.



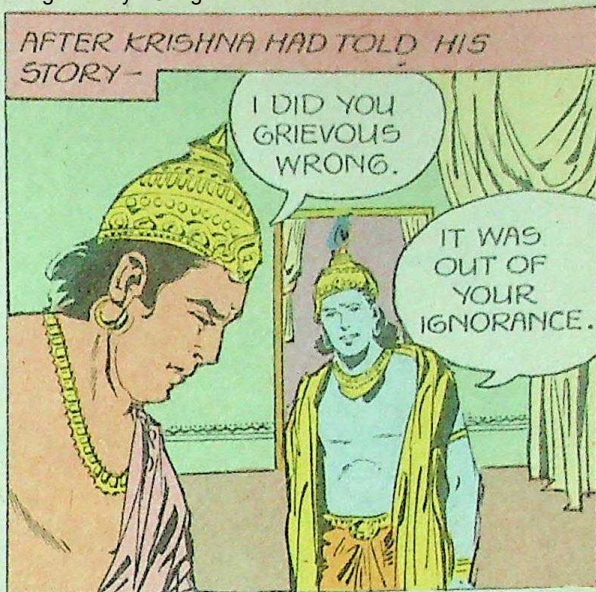
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KRISHNA RETURNED WITH HIS BRIDE AND THE SYAMANTAKA JEWEL TO DWARAKA.



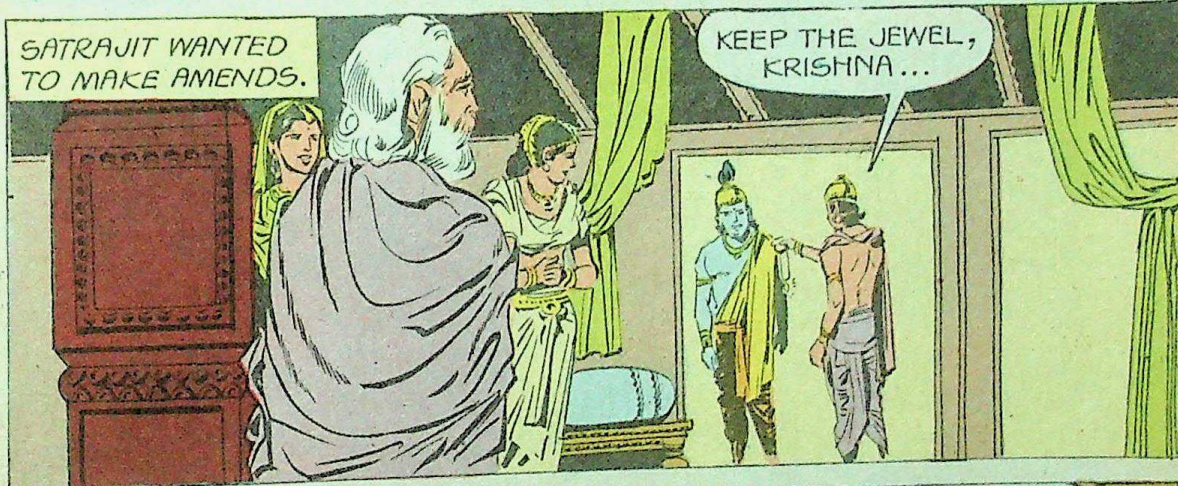
WHEN SATRAJIT CAME--



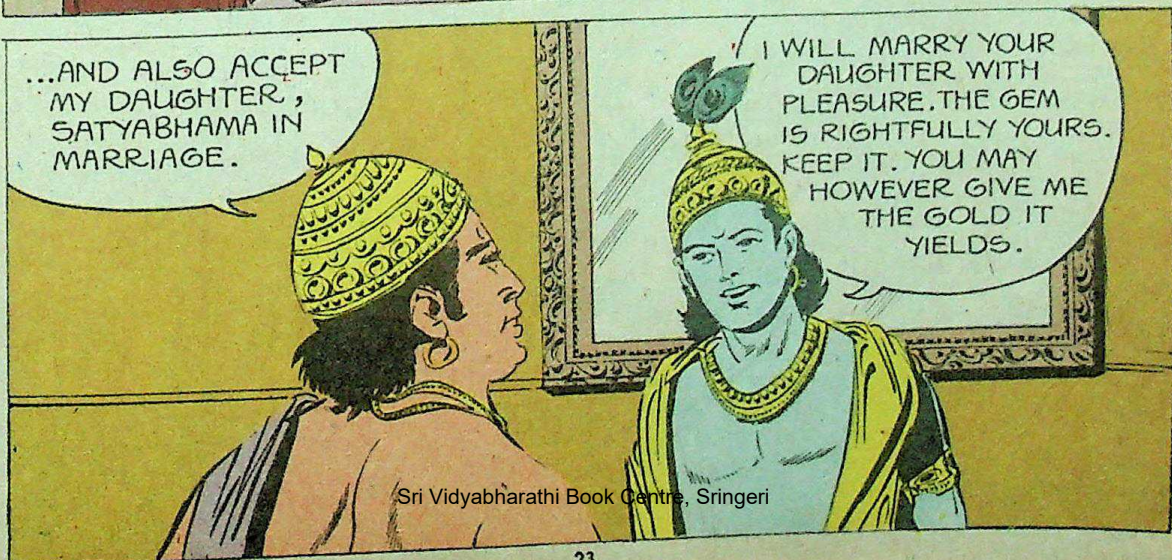
AFTER KRISHNA HAD TOLD HIS STORY--



SATRAJIT WANTED TO MAKE AMENDS.



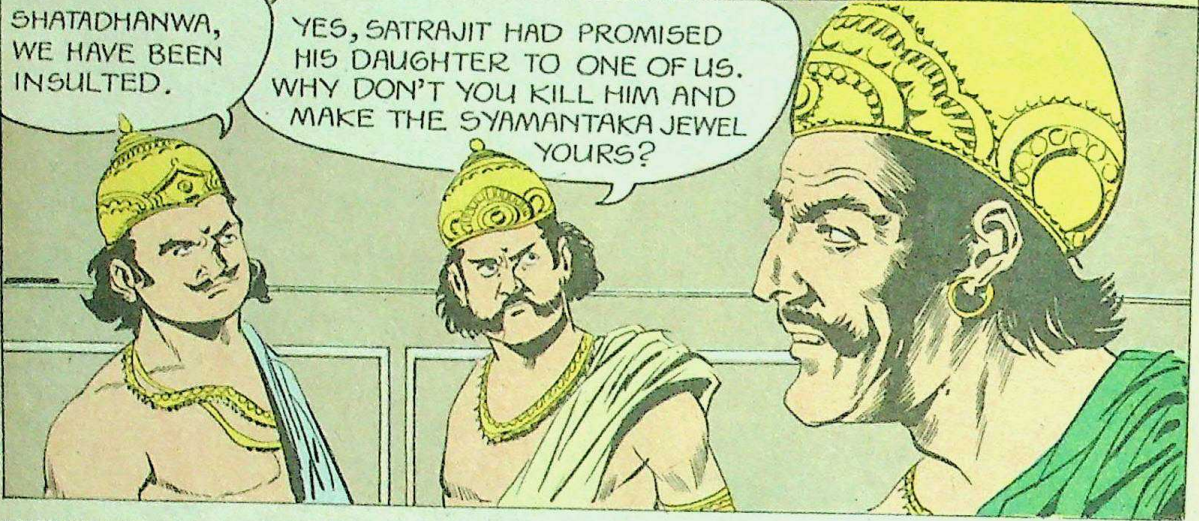
...AND ALSO ACCEPT MY DAUGHTER, SATYABHAMA IN MARRIAGE.



MEANWHILE, SATYABHAMA'S DISAPPOINTED SUITORS, AKRURA, KRITAVARMA AND SHATADHANWA, NURSED THOUGHTS OF REVENGE.

SHATADHANWA,
WE HAVE BEEN
INSULTED.

YES, SATRAJIT HAD PROMISED
HIS DAUGHTER TO ONE OF US.
WHY DON'T YOU KILL HIM AND
MAKE THE SYAMANTAKA JEWEL
YOURS?

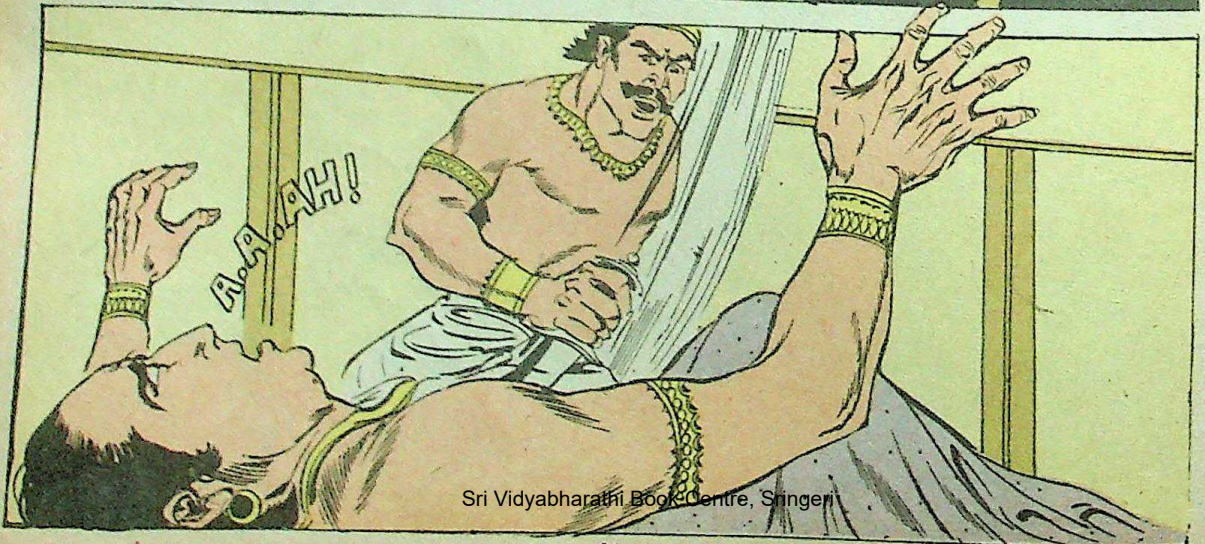


EAGER TO POSSESS THE GEM, THE EVIL
SHATADHANWA DECIDED TO KILL SATRAJIT.

THE JEWEL
WILL SOON
BE MINE.



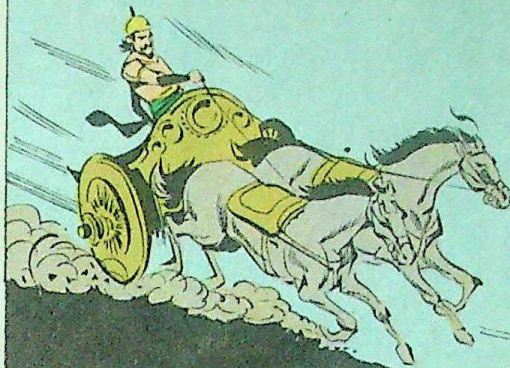
AAAH!



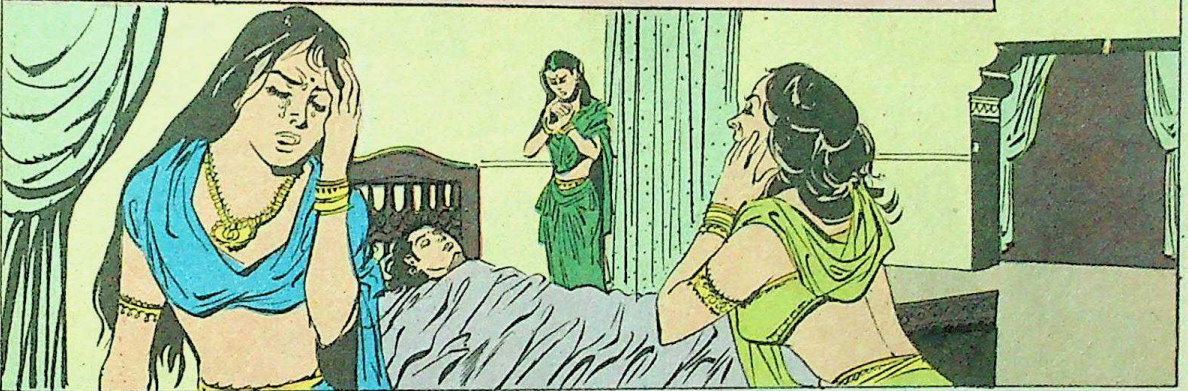
TAKING THE GEM...



...SHATADHANWA RODE AWAY.



THE WOMEN OF SATRAJIT'S HOUSE, SET UP LOUD LAMENTATIONS.



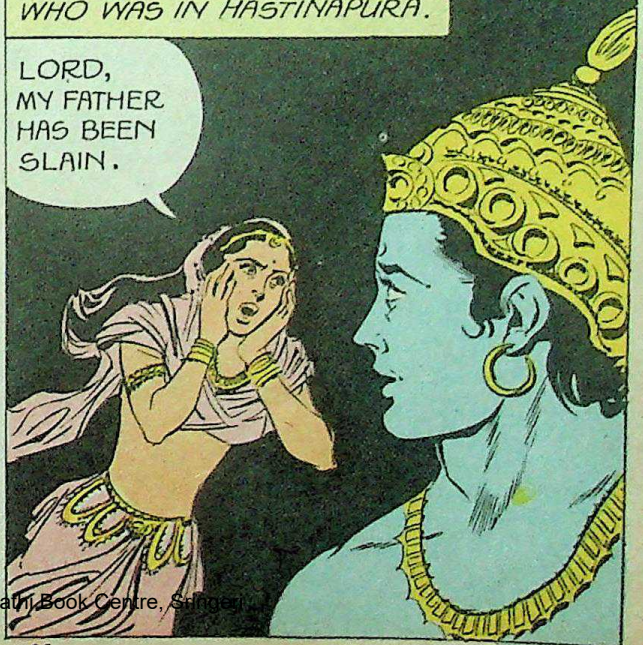
SATYABHAMA WAS HEART-BROKEN.

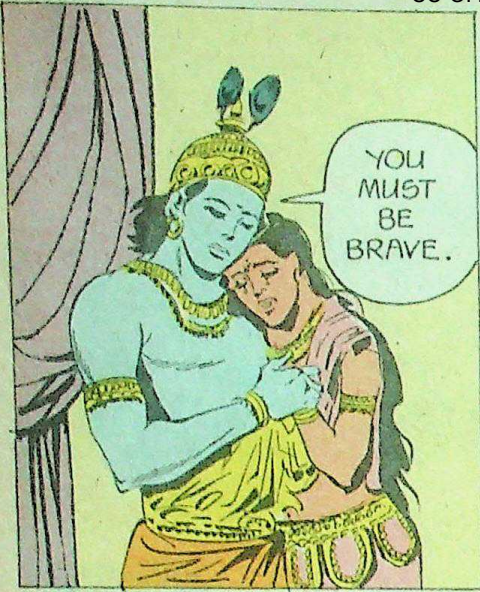
FATHER...
FATHER...



SHE WENT TO KRISHNA
WHO WAS IN HASTINAPURA.

LORD,
MY FATHER
HAS BEEN
SLAIN.





MEANWHILE THE GUILTY SHATADHANWA
APPEALED TO KRITAVARMA.

PLEASE, SHELTER
ME FROM THE
WRATH OF
KRISHNA.

GO ELSEWHERE.



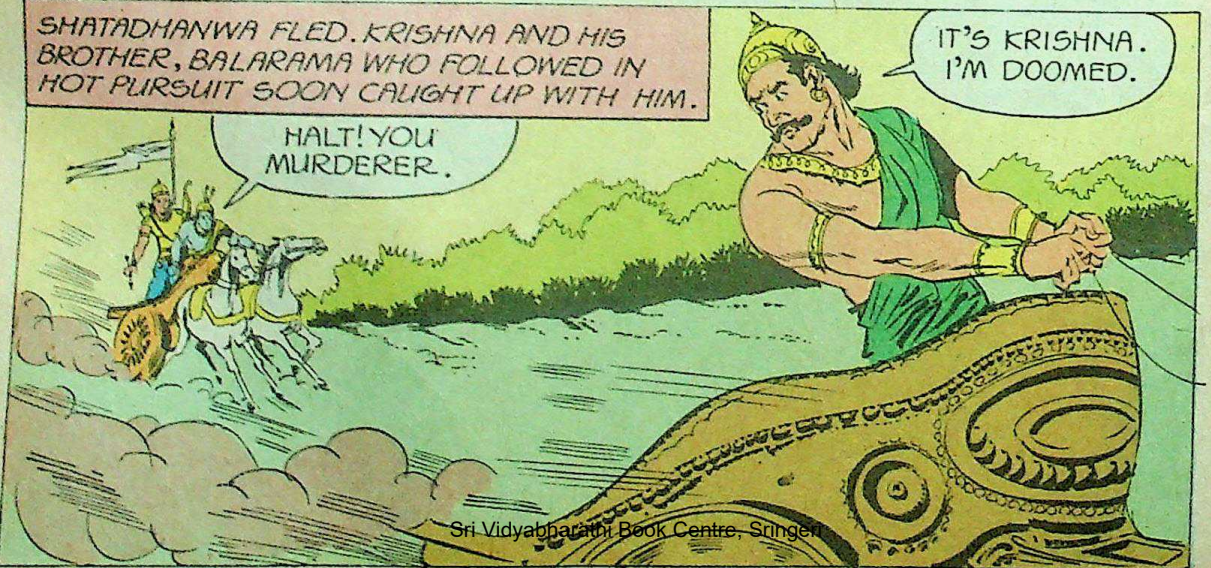
SHATADHANWA THEN WENT TO AKRURA
WHO GAVE HIM THE SAME ANSWER.

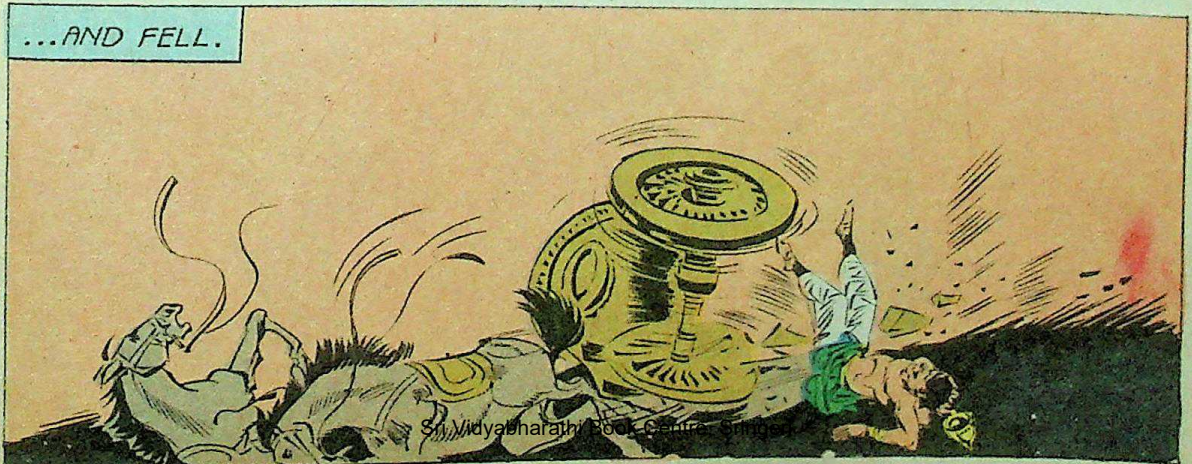
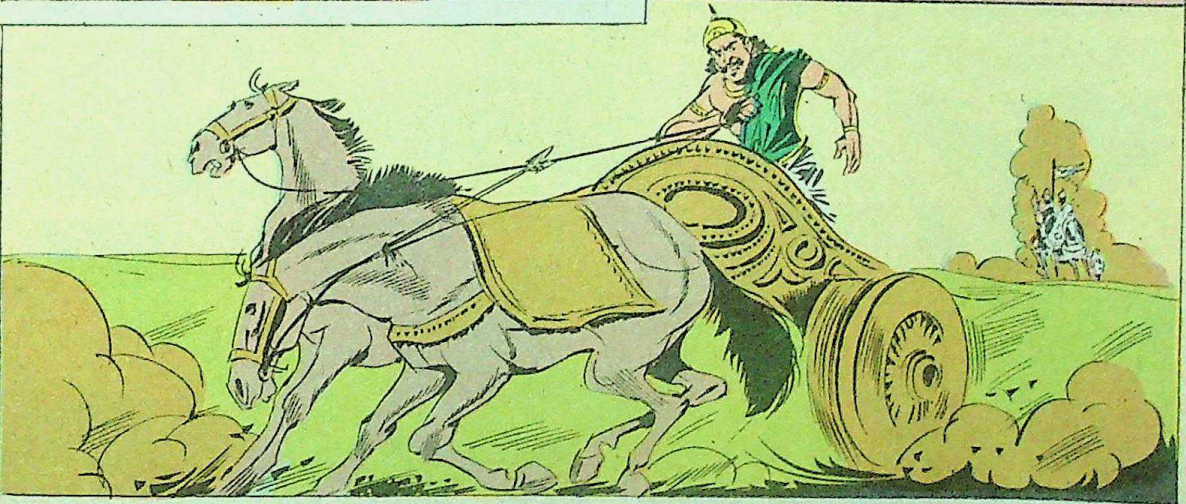
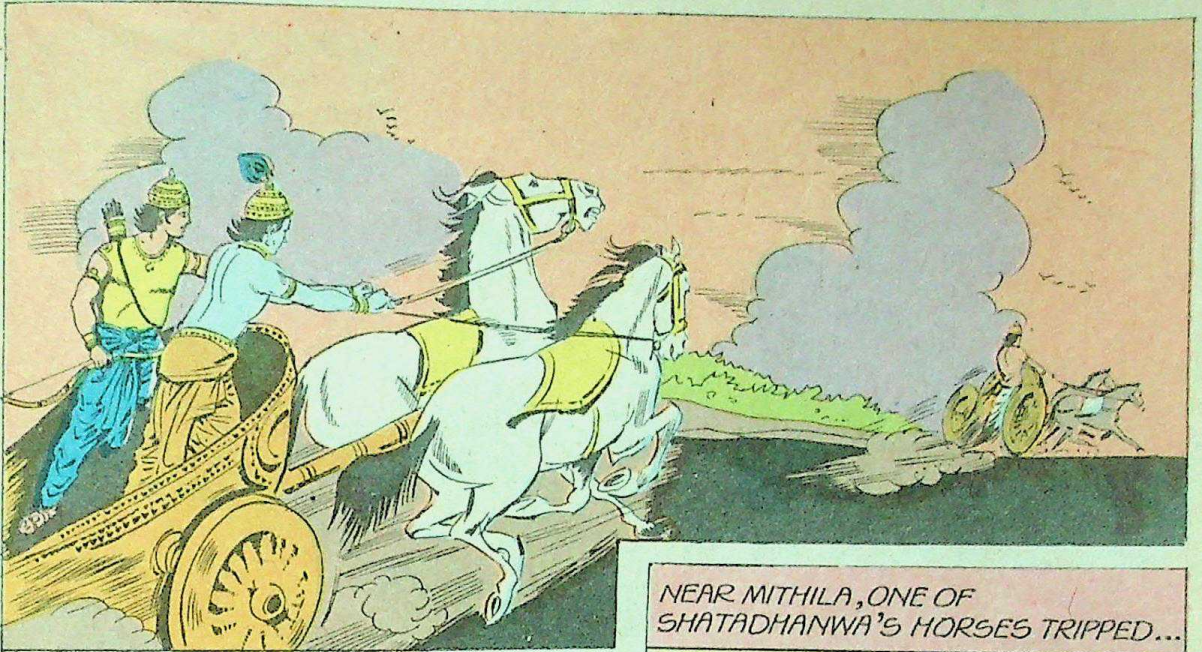


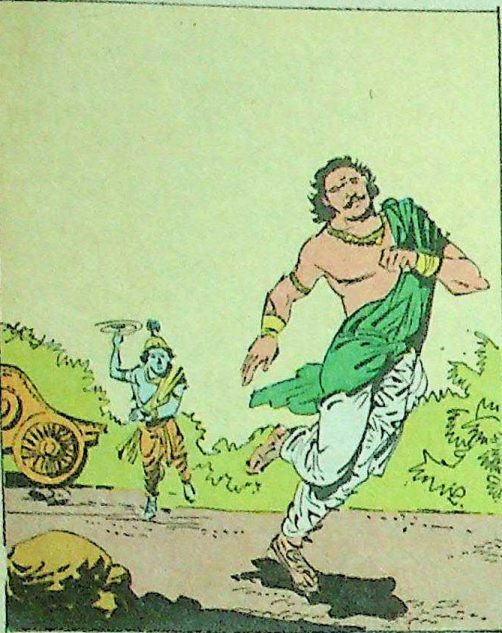
SHATADHANWA FLED. KRISHNA AND HIS
BROTHER, BALARAMA WHO FOLLOWED IN
HOT PURSUIT SOON CAUGHT UP WITH HIM.

HALT! YOU
MURDERER.

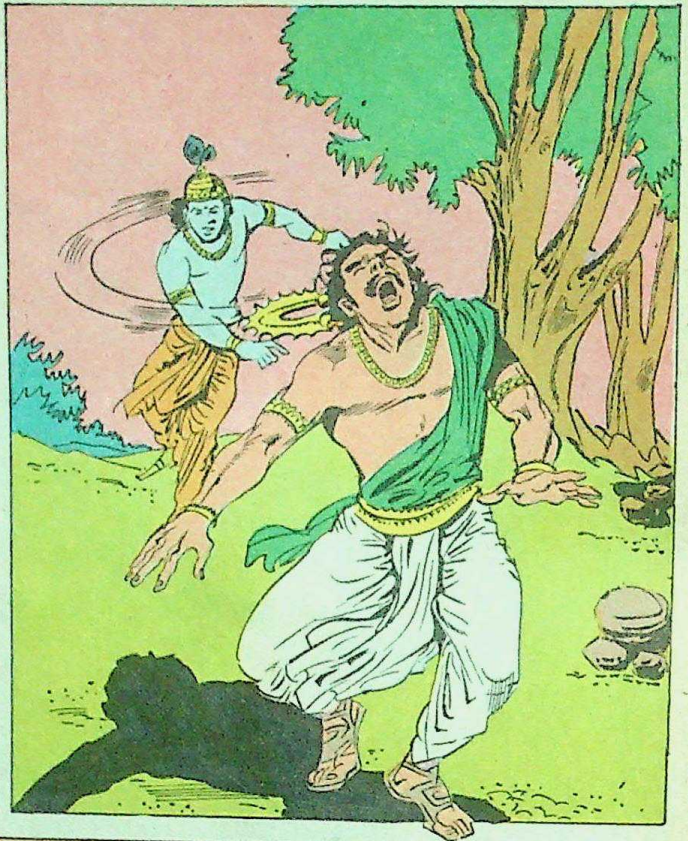
IT'S KRISHNA.
I'M DOOMED.







SHATADHANWA FELL DEAD.



HE DOES NOT HAVE THE JEWEL. HE MUST HAVE GIVEN IT TO AKRURA.

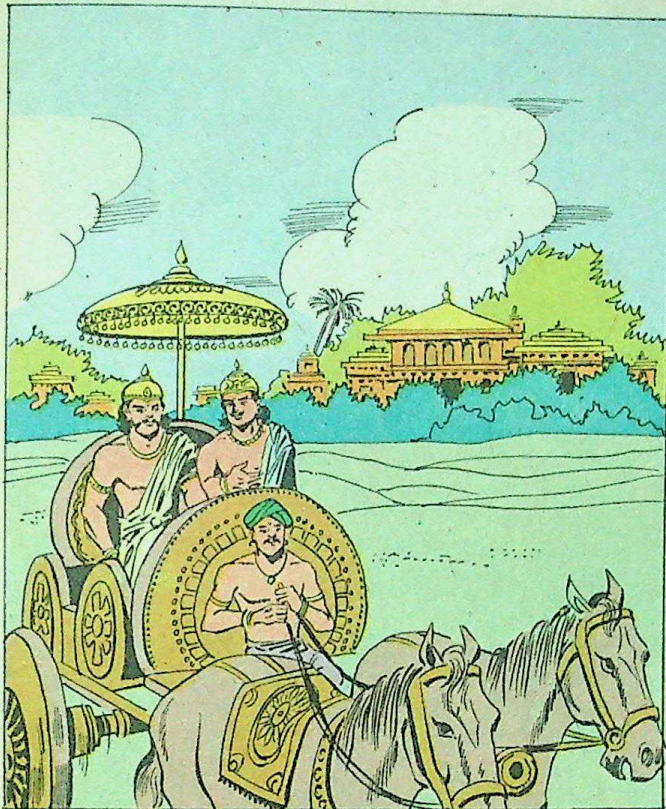


WHEN KRITAVARMA LEARNT OF SHATADHANWA'S FATE -

KRISHNA HAS KILLED SHATADHANWA, I HEAR.

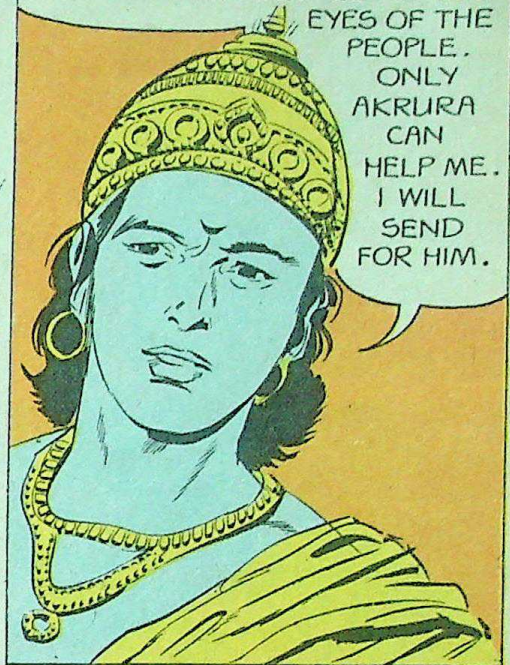
HE WILL COME HERE NEXT. LET US FLEE BEFORE HE GETS HERE.

Sri Vidyarthi Bhawan Varanasi, Singeri



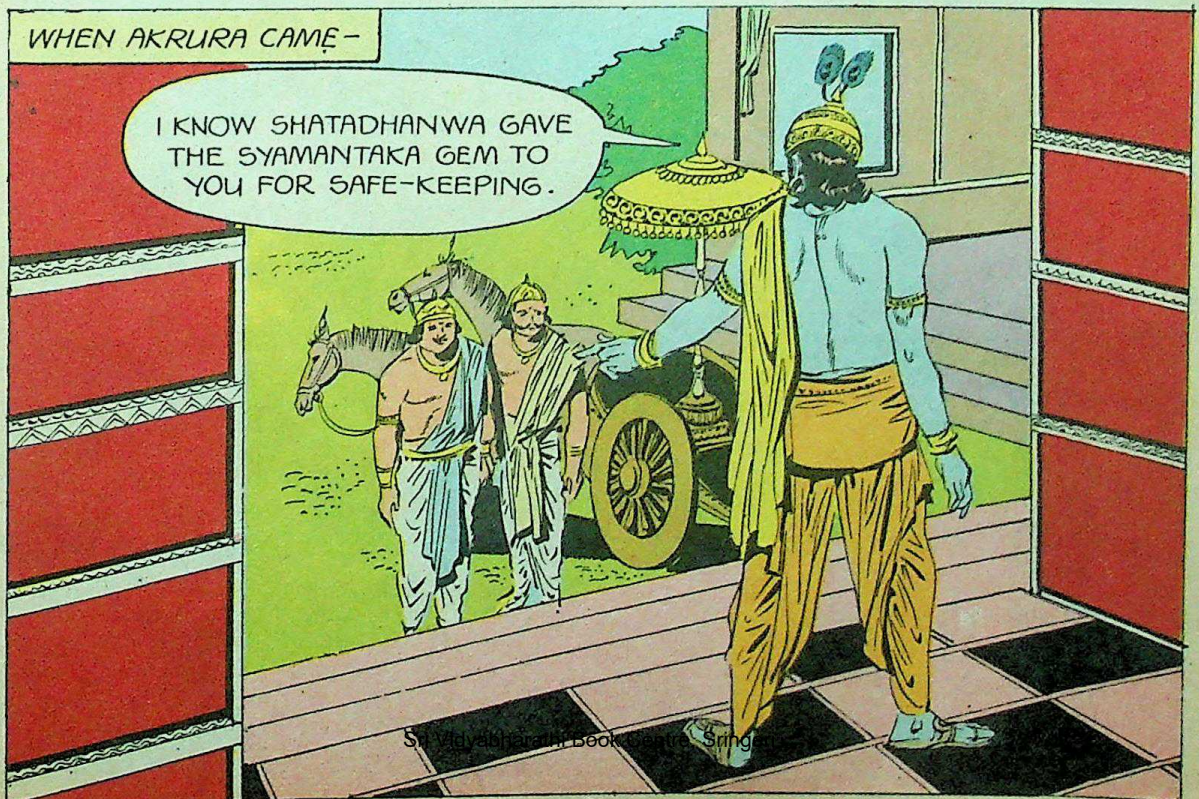
A FEW DAYS LATER AT DWARAKA—

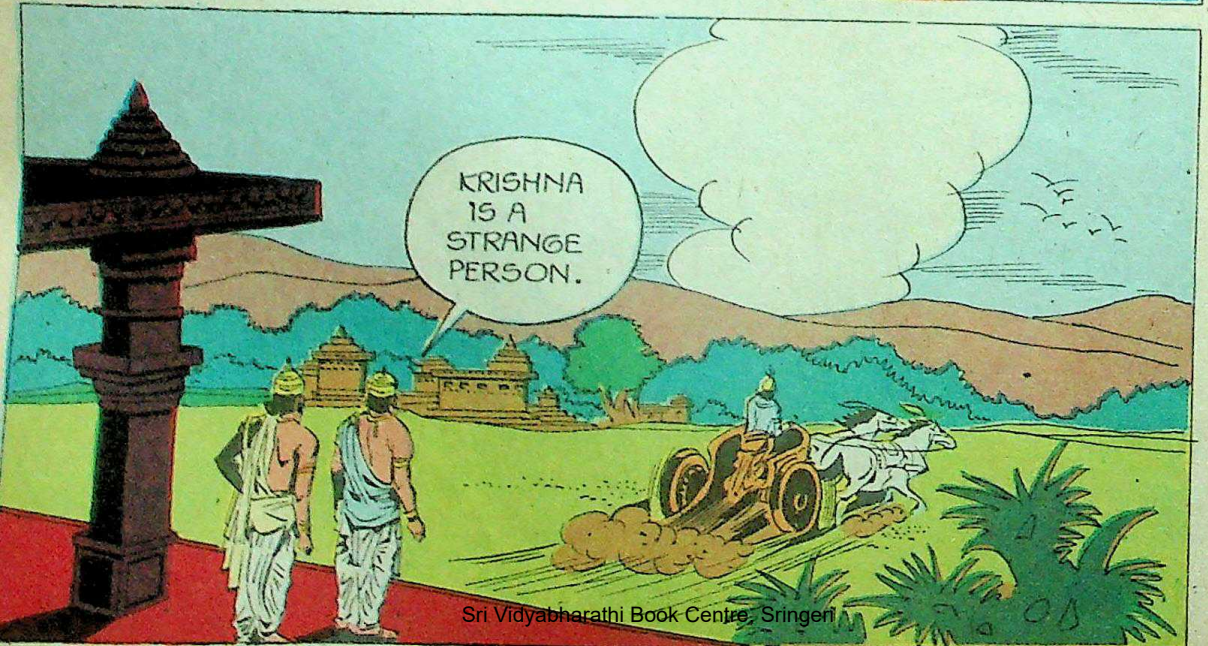
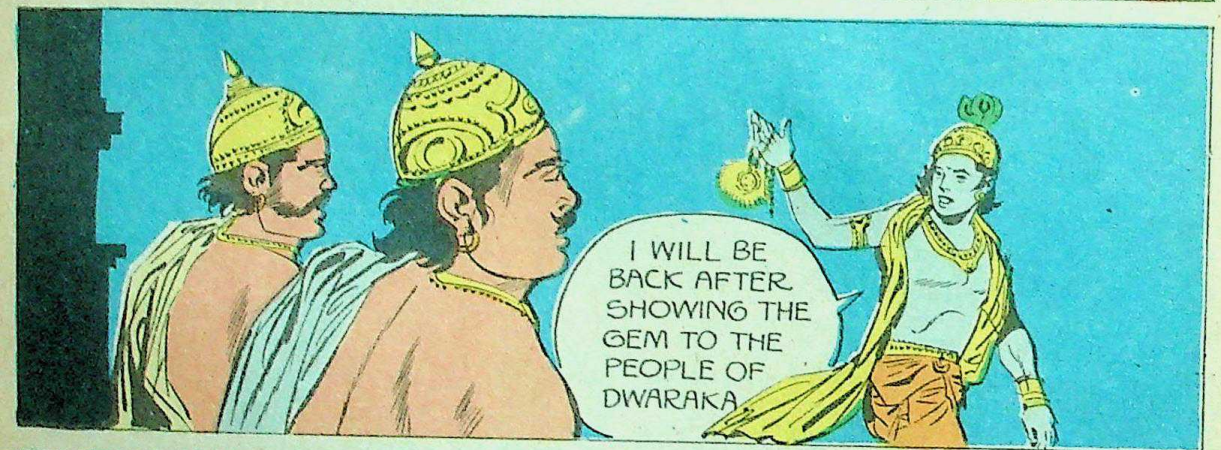
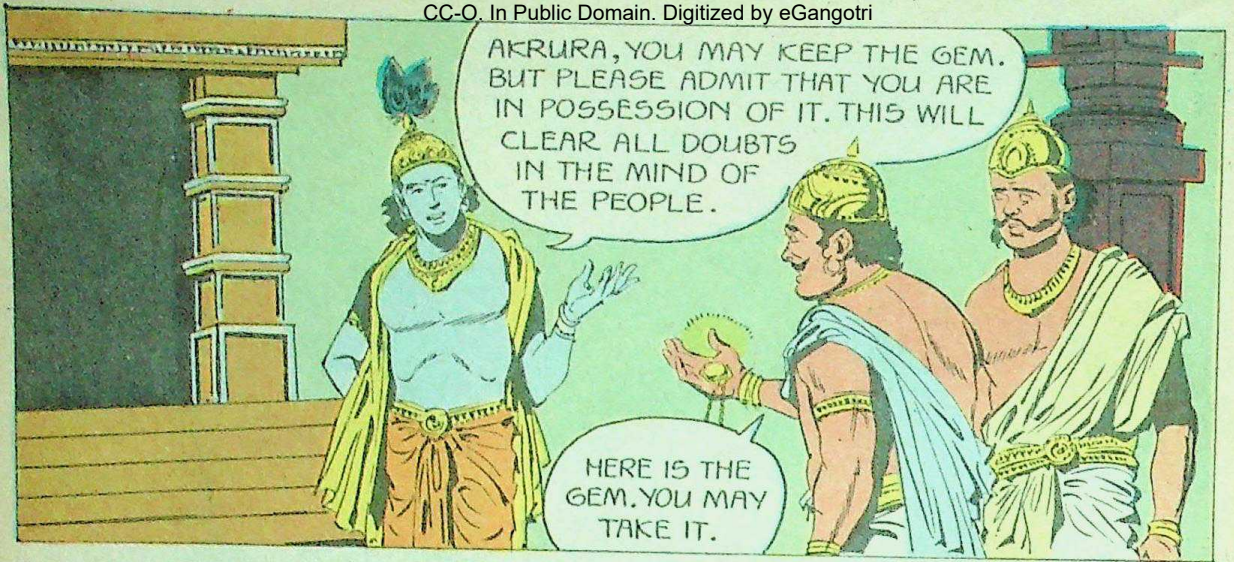
UNLESS THE GEM IS FOUND,
I WILL REMAIN SUSPECT IN THE
EYES OF THE
PEOPLE.
ONLY
AKRURA
CAN
HELP ME.
I WILL
SEND
FOR HIM.

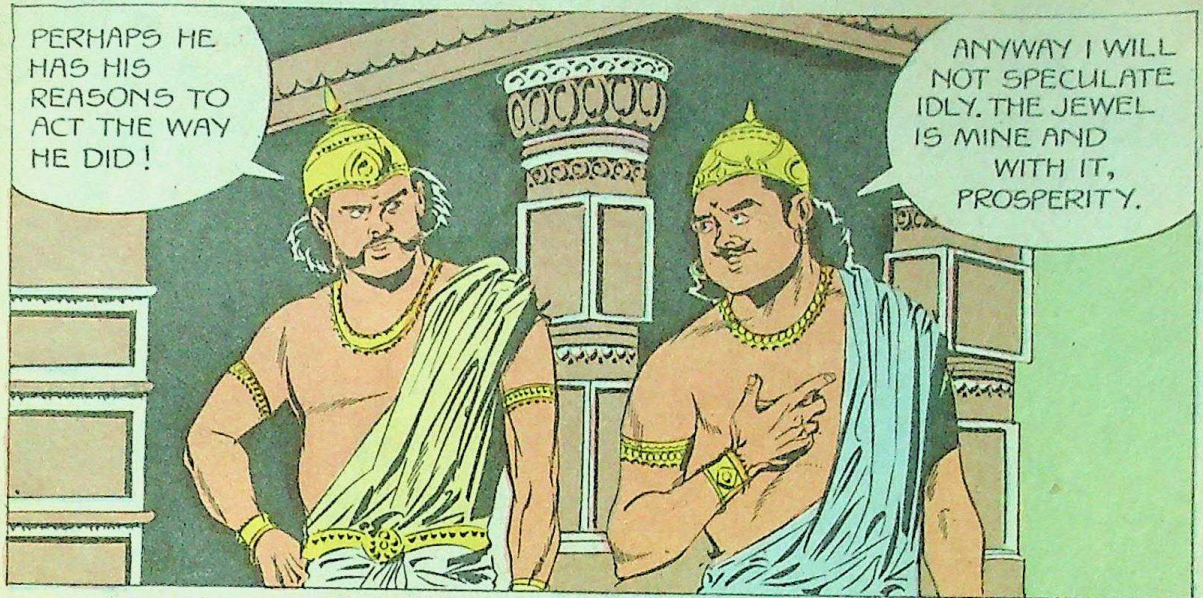


WHEN AKRURA CAME—

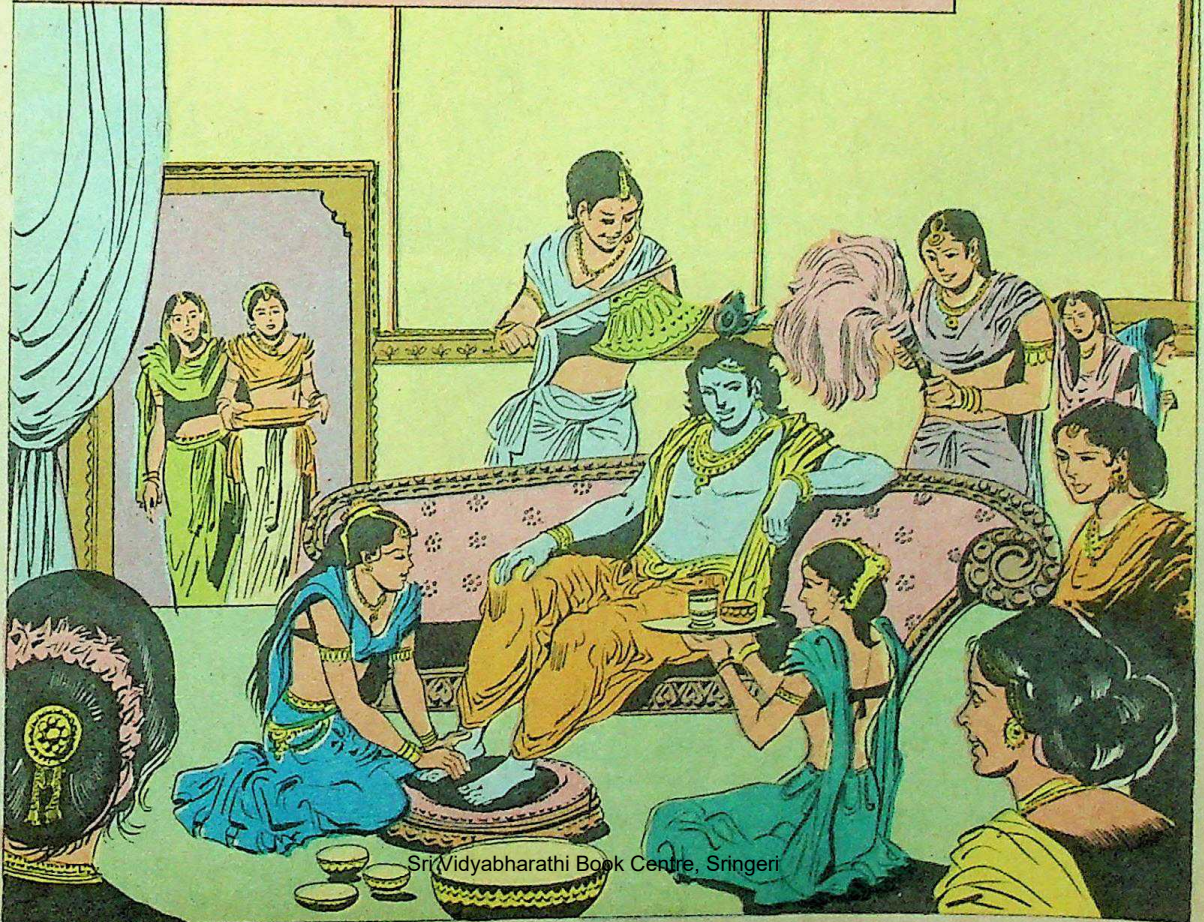
I KNOW SHATADHANWA GAVE
THE SYAMANTAKA GEM TO
YOU FOR SAFE-KEEPING.

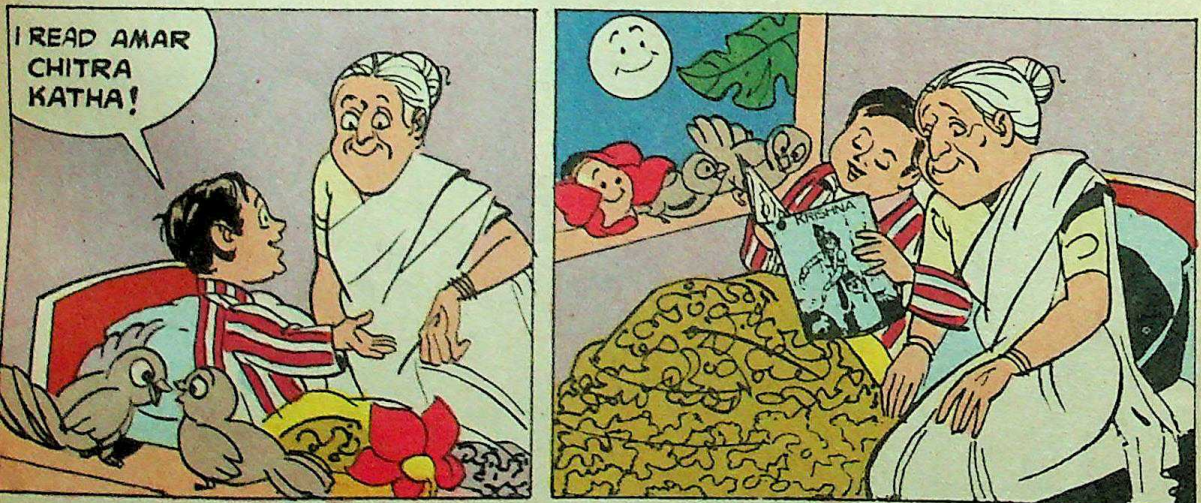
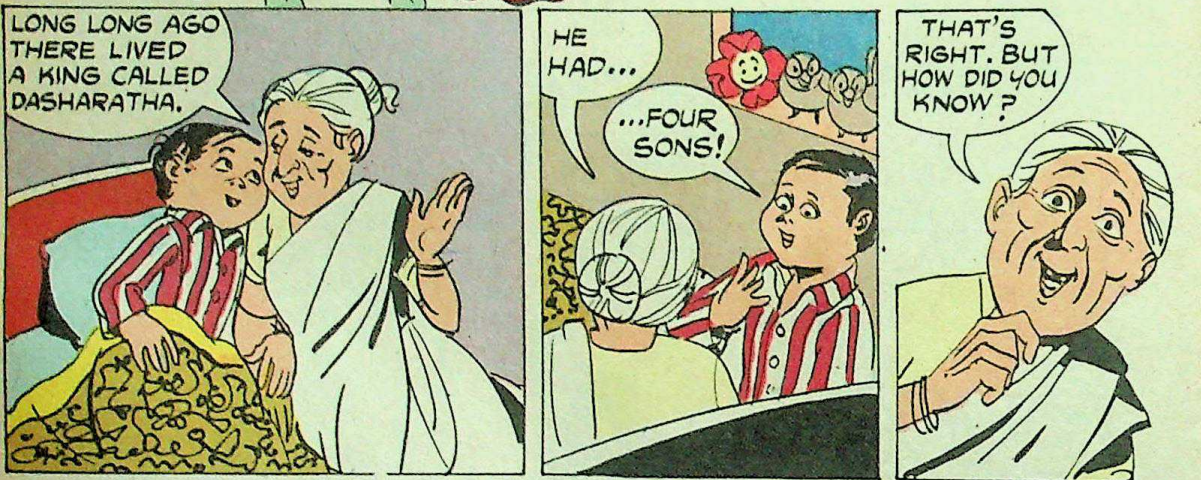
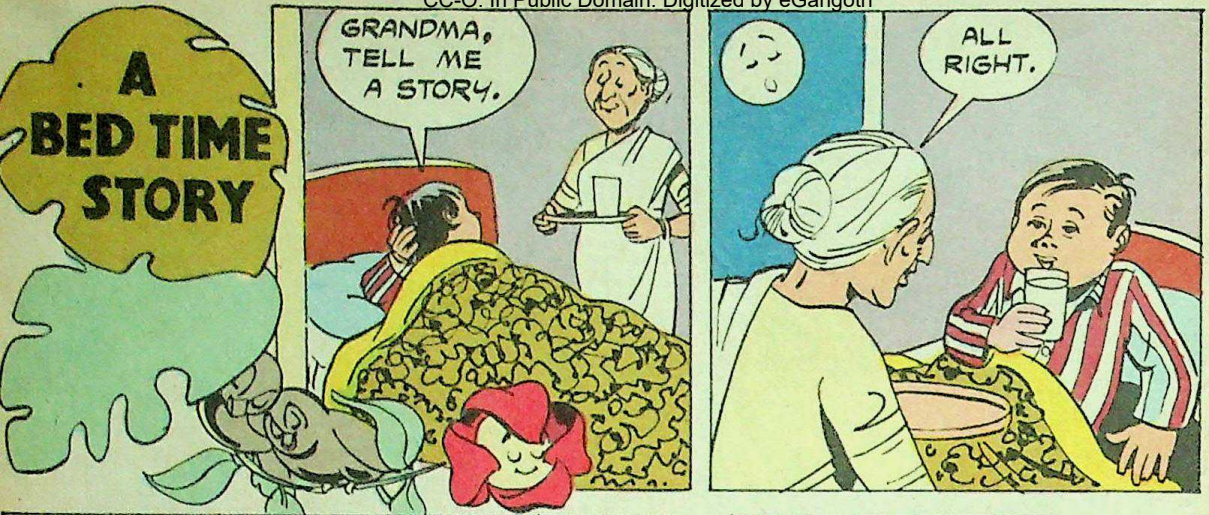






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| 8) The Escape | 22) The Reunion | 36) The Battle at Midnight |
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